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UNKNOWN HAMPSHIRE

THE COUNTY SERIES.

A Series of books dealing with the beauties and byways of the Counties, produced and bound in uniform style.

"I hope that this series will eventually embrace every English county—if the future volumes keep up to the standard of those already published there will be no more delightful series on the market."—RICHARD KING in the *Tatler*.

UNKNOWN KENT

UNKNOWN SUSSEX

UNKNOWN SURREY

UNKNOWN ESSEX

UNKNOWN NORFOLK

UNKNOWN SUFFOLK

UNKNOWN WARWICKSHIRE

UNKNOWN CORNWALL

UNKNOWN DORSET

THE BODLEY HEAD



BOURNEMOUTH

"A sand-built ridge
of heaped hills that mound the sea."
Tennyson.

UNKNOWN HAMPSHIRE

By CLIVE HOLLAND

Illustrated by DOUGLAS SNOWDON



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PREFACE

IT is not, perhaps, unfitting that a Hampshire man should have written this book about his native county. As one who has caravanned, cycled and motored, as well as walked, in all parts of Hampshire, and in whom his native county has inspired a sincere affection on account of its history, beauty and antiquarian interests, I hope I may have discovered at least some things which may be unknown and interesting to those in the wider world outside its borders ; and that what I have found may induce them to make a closer acquaintance with " the County of the Rose," and some of its historical towns, picturesque villages and rural beauty spots.

Though no set route has been followed, but rather a series of wanderings taken at various times have been linked up into a more or less cohesive whole, most of the county will be found to have been covered in these various adventures.

Hampshire is, indeed, a wonderful county. In many respects it is one of the most historic of all English counties ; one of the most beautiful ; and one most truly English in its

general characteristics. Indeed, no one who knows Hampshire well can be ignorant of English history, of gracious architecture representing many centuries of development, and of the gallant deeds and romance which go to build a kingdom, and in the past have served to make England as we know it.

Hampshire in the past has had many writers amongst its sons and daughters, and it can claim to have been the birthplace of several novelists, possessing the fire of genius, who have become classics. No other county has quite the same type of book relative to it as was given to Hampshire by Gilbert White of Selborne, who so lovingly described the natural beauties and life of the delightful corner of the county in which he dwelt.

Here, too, is a picture of Hampshire as sketched by Mary Russell Mitford, in a letter to Sir William Elford. Though she writes particularly of the south of Hampshire the picture she draws is almost equally true of the whole of the county :—

The scenery of the south of Hampshire is of all others the most difficult to describe ; for it is not the picturesqueness which may be thrown off in a few careless strokes ; or the sublime which, with the wish to delineate it, almost inspires the power ; but the beautiful—sometimes in its gayest, and sometimes in its softest dress—but always the beautiful, of which the prevailing and pervading charm is not the woods or streams or villages, nor even the sparkling ocean, but the exquisite arrangement and combination of the whole.

My book does not lay claim to completeness, for to do justice to every little town and beautiful village, to say nothing of the wonderful manor-houses, churches and other historic buildings, would need a book many times as large.

But I venture to hope that it is fairly comprehensive. It is, indeed, as it were, a patchwork of many pleasant experiences and memories, assembled together to form a whole which may satisfy the not too exacting critic, and even please many who live within the county.

Naturally, in my researches relative to historical events, architectural details, and lore and legend, I have had to delve among documents and previous works somewhat extensively, and the author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness, particularly to the "Victoria County History of Hampshire," Woodward's "History of Hampshire," and the works of Gilbert White, Rev. William Gilpin, Mudie, and to the Rev. G. N. Godwin's "Civil War in Hampshire."

If my book, wedded to the charming pictures of the artist who has illustrated it, serves to awaken a greater love of the county in Hampshire hearts, and in those of strangers the desire to visit its lesser known beauty spots and picturesque and interesting towns, it will have served its intended purpose.

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UNKNOWN HAMPSHIRE

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW FOREST—ITS BEAUTY AND ROMANCE—THE CAPITAL AND SOME CHARACTERISTICS.

THE New Forest originally took unto itself importance largely from the fact that it was in the same county and within a ride of the capital city of Winchester, which the foreign Norman and Angevin Kings made their headquarters. In the minds of most of us, indeed, the New Forest is indissolubly linked with the historical events of the Norman era ; and few, indeed, save students, associate it either with more ancient events or with much that has occurred since those remote times. The Norman Kings used to indulge in their sport at Malwood, where tradition states stood a hunting-lodge of William the Conqueror, and then pass on their way to their Duchy and to Rouen via Beaulieu or Lymington where the ships were in waiting to take them across the Channel.

The making of the New Forest by William the Conqueror, and the putting of it under a separate set of forest laws exempt from the general law of the land, and at the absolute disposal of the sovereign, undoubtedly led to much cruelty and many ejections of original owners. If one may believe tradition the House of William of Normandy paid a heavy price for the violent deeds of its founder, for we are told that Richard, William I's son, was fatally injured in the Forest by the branch of a tree whilst hunting the deer, and

there is a record in "Domesday Book" of the Conqueror having restored to the rightful owners some lands as a penitential offering for his son's soul. Then the second son of the Conqueror, another Richard, who was an illegitimate child, also died in the Forest; and afterwards a third son, Rufus, who became William II, met his death, either by accident or design, within the boundaries of this great domain of sport.

The area of the forest in those days was as great as that of the Isle of Wight. Its boundaries were set roughly, on the north, by a line drawn from the River Avon to the River Ouse, which separated Hampshire from Wiltshire; on the west by the River Avon as far down as Christchurch; on the south from Christchurch to Calshott Castle; and on the east by Southampton Water and the River Ouse. The area contained within these boundaries was, roughly, 224 square miles or 143,000 acres, of which rather more than 90,000 acres still lie within the boundaries of the Forest.

Such an area contained in ancient times all the features which went to the making of an ideal forest and hunting-ground. It comprised dense woods, open heaths, pools, thickets, rivers, and was also possessed of four beautiful estuaries of rivers—Christchurch, Lymington, Beaulieu and Southampton Water—in which, to quote an old writer, there was "an abundance of game, much fish, and wild fowl."

How this vast forest was made seems open to grave doubt, for the accusation contained in Lingard "that the King already possessing nearly seventy forests, besides

parks and chases, in different parts of England, was not satisfied, but for the occasional accommodation of his Court afforested an extensive track of country lying between Winchester and the seacoast," and the further statement that "the inhabitants were expelled, the cottages and churches burned, and more than thirty square miles of a rich and populous district were withdrawn from cultivation, and converted into a wilderness, to afford sufficient range for the deer," cannot be accepted without criticism.

Another account states that many populous towns and villages and thirty-six parish churches were destroyed. But doubtless in those days, as in these, feeling ran high and exaggeration was very rife. It must be remembered, too, that the Normans were the conquerors, and were bitterly hated for many years in consequence. William Cobbett was one of those who turned his attention to the disproof of this view of William the Norman's action, and stated that in his opinion the district in question "could never have been rich and populous" from the fact that the soil of the forest as a whole—exclusive of a few quite fertile patches—is among the poorest in the southern portion of England.

In the middle of the last century of Forest lands no less than 30,000 acres, or, roughly, a third of the number remaining within its boundaries, were reported as unfit for agriculture, afforestation or pasturage. It is inconceivable, too, that such a number of parish churches should have been destroyed, for there still remain in the New Forest eleven



WESTERN NEW FOREST DISTRICT.

either dating from, or the foundations of which were in existence prior to, the Norman Conquest. Cobbett therefore writes: "If he (the Conqueror) destroyed thirty-six parish churches what a populous country this must have been!" It would give at least one parish church to less than five square miles, an inconceivable number. The probability is that in making the New Forest William the Conqueror did not commit half the cruelties, injustices and harshness attributed to him, by which he reserved the exclusive right of sport within to himself, while the original owners of the lands retained their possessions—such as woods, mills, and other property—as before, except for the stringent regulations of the Forest law.

It may not be amiss to state briefly of what "Forest Law" really consisted. In effect it made of the area to which it was applied a district where the ordinary law of the land at once ceased to run, and the usual rights of property only existed under conditions which were chiefly directed to the preservation of game. The mediæval excuse appears to have been that it was a convenient method of controlling wild districts infested by outlaws, robbers, and other non-law abiding people under the strong rule of the King, and in times of War provided a reserve from which could be drawn men, and timber for the building of ships. As far back as 1184—in the reign of Henry II—an Assize of the Forest laid down that no one might sell or give any portion of his own wood, if within the Forest, which would either depreciate or destroy the trees; the only thing excepted was firewood.

The result of this enactment was, of course, that timber could not be felled, and therefore ceased to be private property within the Crown Forests. No one, too, was allowed to turn out his cattle, to graze was called "agisting," and no spring grazing was allowed, so saplings and seedlings had a chance to grow.

There was provision also that open spaces were to be cut, somewhat on the lines of the present "rides" or avenues, to enable the deer to be shot at. No tanner or bleacher of skins was permitted to live in the Forest, and no receivers or thieves. The rigour of the Forest laws seems to have continued until the reign of Henry III, in whose reign a Charter of the Forests was framed to ameliorate the annoyance and inconveniences from which the inhabitants had suffered owing to the harshness of the former laws. Among other things it provided that every free man should be allowed to "agist" his own wood in the Forest when he pleased, and to have his own eyries for hawks, falcons, eagles, etc., and his own heronries.

The Charter of Henry III also granted permission for the foresters, or inhabitants of the Forest, to drive their pigs and cattle through the Forest, and allowed them to spend the night on the King's land, with other privileges which are probably the origin of many "forest rights" existent or claimed in the district down to the present day.

It is only right to say that notwithstanding this Charter there would appear to have been hardships in mediæval times in connection with the New Forest and the laws

governing it ; and certainly there is evidence in " Domesday Book " of confiscation of land for the purpose of forming this wonderful expanse of woodland, which to-day is one of the chief beauty spots in the South of England.

While some of the rigours of the Forest laws as a means of preserving game were relaxed as the centuries passed, the protection given by them to the timber and woods was never withdrawn, and undoubtedly it is to these laws that we owe the preservation of our ancient timber, down to the present day, not only in the New Forest, but in other forests throughout the country.

In the days of Charles I, and afterwards in those of the Commonwealth, the woods were administered with great laxity, with the result that they suffered considerably. Later on when greater care was taken in the carrying out of the Forest regulations the trees increased, and many of these, then newly planted, have become the forest giants of to-day.

The present management of the Forest is vested under an act passed in 1877 based on the provision that all except some 20,000 acres, enclosed since the year 1700, are to remain open and wild ; but even in this area Forest law still runs, and the timber is protected from waste and indiscriminate felling.

Lovers and students of nature find a never failing charm in this exquisite survival of bygone ages, every path or road in which takes one to beauty spots of the greatest charm, with vistas of Forest scenery unexcelled by any in the United Kingdom.

There is great variety, too, for example round Rufus's Stone, and at Mark Ash one has some of the finest timber in the Forest, the age of whose giants dates far back into the centuries ; and south-west and south of Brockenhurst one finds open moorlands ablaze in summer with the purple



A HAMPSHIRE VILLAGE GREEN.

of heather and the golden gorse, with here and there a pond or pool steel-grey in autumn, and in summer taking on something of the tint of blue skies, and reflecting the huge white argosies of cloud which sail across the placid heavens. Then southward along the coasts, to which the Forest once thickly extended and still borders the shores of Southamp-

ton Water, Lymington Creek, and the Beaulieu River, one has marsh and meadows rich in flora, and intriguing in their beauty. To merely give a list of the forest trees would be to weary, but within the confines of the New Forest are found most of the trees and shrubs of the south of England, including primeval oaks, stately beeches, shapely elms, the ash, the exquisite feathery silver birch, horse chestnuts, and edible chestnuts, walnut trees, which recall to one's mind the old catch of "a woman, a dog, and a walnut tree, the more they're beaten the better they be"; with hazel bushes, alders, hollies and evergreen oaks among the lesser trees and thickets of the forest.

To see the Forest to the best advantage and to realize its extent even at the present time one cannot do better than ascend the ridge known as Stonycross Plain, which divides the northern from the central forest.

One reaches it along the old road which runs from Winchester to Ringwood, and thence to the Dorset seaport, Poole, a road traversed in ancient times by Norman Kings and nobles, pedlars, packmen and pilgrims, and in more modern days by post-chaises, stage-coaches, and now in summer-time by a stream of motor-cars and coaches.

From the summit of the ridge one gains a wide prospect of the whole forest, north, south and east, extending before one's eyes in endless expanses of woods; in summer, of various shades of green restful to the eye and pleasing to the sight; and in autumn, a glorious sea of colour ranging through reds to deepest browns and palest yellows.

It was along this road that Sir Walter Tyrrell is said to have fled after his shooting of Rufus to a ford of the Avon, still known as Tyrrell's Ford, where, so the story goes, he forced the smith to shoe his horse with the shoes reversed, and then killed the man so that he might not be betrayed. A yearly fine was and, so far as we have been able to ascertain, is still paid by the owners of the house at Tyrrell's Ford as a penance for the aid given to the fugitive.

The regicide reached Poole, and taking ship to Normandy made good his escape. Tyrrell, tradition says, always persisted that the fatal shot which killed his King was the result of an accident ; but whether this be so or not he did not act as a man with a clear conscience, for he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he died. From near the spot where eight centuries ago the terrified knight joined the road on Stonycross Plain, reached by one of the narrower forest tracks, one obtains perhaps the finest view of the Forest there is. This northern ridge, on which the plain lies, is almost the highest land in the Forest, for beyond it, to the south, the Forest lands slope down towards the Solent, across which on a clear day the hills of the Isle of Wight are distinctly visible. The panorama one obtains is very unlike any other of equal extent in the South of England, for in place of the usual irregular chessboard effect, produced by the boundaries of fields, right to the coast nothing is visible but woods, heaths, and commons, seeming to roll away in a succession of long ridges running chiefly east and west.

Eastward one's view extends to Southampton Water, and across it to a further expanse of woods and but faintly seen houses near Netley Abbey, and southward to Calshot Castle. In the centre of the panorama one catches glimpses of the spire of Lyndhurst Church, Boldrewood, Minstead, Rhinefield, Wilverley Post, and Christchurch to the west. Behind, north and north-east one has the Wiltshire Downs, and to the right lie the chalk hills extending beyond Romsey right up to Winchester.

Below one has a valley in which William Rufus met his death, with the beautiful beech woods of Eyeworth Walk and Bramble Hill extending on the slopes. Malwood, where the hunting-lodge stood in which Rufus passed the night before his death, and on the site of which only about fifty years ago the keeper of Malwood Walk had his lodge, is the eastern buttress of this high ridge on which we stand. The hunting-lodge and the keeper's lodge have both in their turn disappeared, and in their place stands Castle Malwood Lodge, a long, low and picturesquely timbered house with many gables, formerly the residence of Sir William Vernon Harcourt, a great political figure in the late Victorian period.

It is well, if one desires really to grasp the extent of the Forest, the mass of its beauty and its great silence, to come to such a spot as Stonycross Ridge from which to make one's observations.

Before returning to Lyndhurst, "the capital of the Forest," one may well descend from the ridge to Canterton Glen, where stands Rufus's Stone, set amid wonderful and

ancient oaks, now cased in an iron jacket bearing the following inscription :

“ Here stood the oak tree, on which an arrow, shot by Sir Walter Tyrrell on a stag, glanced and struck King William II (Surnamed Rufus) in the breast, of which he instantly died, on the second day of August Anno 1100.

“ King William II being slain, as is before related, was laid in a cart belonging to one Purkess, a charcoal burner, and drawn from thence to Winchester, and buried in the Cathedral Church of that city.

“ That where an event so memorable had happened might not be hereafter unknown, this stone was set up by Lord Delaware who had seen the tree growing in this place, Anno 1745. This stone was repaired by John Richard, Earl of Delaware, Anno 1789.

“ This stone having been much mutilated and inscriptions on each of its three sides defaced, this more desirable memorial with the original inscriptions, was erected in the year 1841, by William Sturges Bourne, Warden.”

In the monkish stories, the death of Rufus was ascribed to the vengeance of God upon a despoiler of the Church, and as the fate of a brutal scoffer at religion, who kept ecclesiastical benefices vacant, and even the throne of the Archbishopric of Canterbury itself empty for three years, so that he might seize the revenues and incomes of the Abbeyes and other ecclesiastical foundations. The vengeance theory of the Church, and the prophecies of an ultimate requital for the King's offences against the Church, which

were common knowledge up to the day of Rufus's death, are straws which point to a motive making Tyrrell not the unconscious and accidental instrument of vengeance, but a secret emissary or instrument of the Church. The probability appears to be that the spot recorded as that where or near where the King fell has foundation in fact as well as in tradition.

It is interesting to note that the descendants of the charcoal burner Purkess, who carried the body to Winchester, enjoyed special rights given them as a reward for that service. Among others that of taking all such wood as they could gather "by hook or by crook," which includes dead branches that might be broken off, although they should not be lopped off by an axe.

A pleasant way from this historic spot back to Lyndhurst is along the Stonycross road as far as Cadnam, and then by the main high road into the town.

One cannot have a better centre for exploring the Forest than its capital, the Lyndhurst of "Domesday Book," which derives its name possibly from "the wood of the lime trees." The village or little town is quite a delightful one in summer, and if one comes to it, as we have done, also in winter, on certain days it presents a very lively appearance owing to the Meet of the Buckhounds, the main street on such occasions being blocked by the hounds, the hunters and people, on foot, or in cars, who have come to the Meet from a distance.

Indeed, Lyndhurst, both summer and winter, is a very different place to-day to what it was only a quarter of a

century ago. Then the summer holiday makers were of the quieter sort, who had come to the place to ramble, cycle, or walk amid its sylvan beauty of its surroundings, and in winter visitors were, indeed, few and far between, other than hunting folk who quartered themselves at one or other of the two hotels.

To-day one must paint a very different picture of this afore-time quiet and retired spot, for through it in summer time passes a constant stream of motors either coming from or going to Southampton and Bournemouth, and even in the winter-time many strangers pass up or down its single street, most of them without troubling to pause to visit either of its two "lions": the fine modern church with its frescoes by the late Lord Leighton, or the Verderer's Hall.

The latter is a bare chamber fitted up as a Court where are tried all offenders against the customs of the forest: the stealers of wood or fern; those who have allowed their cattle to stray outside the limit, and others who have trespassed against the liberties of the forest who are in quaint phrases "presented by the 'agisters'" who assume the part of the knights from the hundreds, and townsmen from the township who formerly "presented" criminals in the shire moots. The proceedings are well worth witnessing. The prisoner sits in what may fairly be claimed as the most primitive dock in the whole of England, on a kind of perch which is reached by a step. Behind is a square back with cross pieces of ancient oak with rough axe marks made in the hewing still visible. Immediately in front of the

prisoner, beyond a narrow clerk's table, sit the bench of Verderers, the officers of the Royal Forest, whose duty it is to take care of the vert, that is, the trees and underwood of the forest, and to keep the Assizes, view, receive and enrol attachments and presentments of all manner of trespasses. One can imagine how the unfortunate offender must have felt, as he sat facing the judges, in the days of the cruel penalties of the Norman or Angevin Kings, when maiming and blinding were common punishments for breaking the Forest laws.

The Court also contains a recess filled with books on forest law hidden, when we saw it, by a curtain made of the skin of a red deer. The walls of the Court itself are decorated with horns of deer, red and fallow, and there also hangs amongst them a great stirrup said to have belonged to William Rufus. Whether Rufus ever used it or not, it is very clearly a stirrup of a remote period when horsemen had thickly mailed feet with broad iron toes, and the stirrup is substantial enough to sustain the weight of the heaviest horseman in coat of mail.

The ancient Queen's House, to which the Verderer's Hall is attached, now the residence of the Deputy Surveyor of the Forest, is situated just below the church, which is built on a high grassy mound in the centre of the town with its spire soaring skyward, and forming a landmark for miles around.

There are no slum areas or thickly populated corners in Lyndhurst, its outskirts are delightful, for the woods them-

selves come right up to its houses, and the parks surrounding the larger mansions in the vicinity are almost lost in the wild forest surrounding them. Cuffnal's Park, a grassy hill clothed with oaks and beeches just outside the town, serves as a link between the more formal gardens of the urban houses and the wide expanse of rolling forest beyond.

Cuffnal's Park has two winding roads leading up on either hand, and in the space which lies between them, climbing gently upwards, is a crescent wood of oaks and beeches with leafy sentinels formed by very ancient thorns. Through the centre, a green glade leads up into the wood, and there is a smooth expanse of turf at the point at which the roads divide. This lawn-like expanse has been given the name Swan Green, and beyond its slope is the little village of Emery Down, upon leaving which the road takes one suddenly into rolling tracts of wild and ancient forest land which seem to blot out all signs and sounds of human life.

One is not more than a mile or two from Lyndhurst when the mystic hush of the Forest begins. If there is no wind singing in the trees it is a silence which can almost be felt, and except in summer and early autumn one hears scarcely any birds and no insects, and one meets neither with men nor children in this part of the Forest. The cattle are grazing on distant lawns, the deer are hidden in the thicker enclosures and the great birds which haunt the Forest are in the more ancient and secluded woods.

It is worth while for those who love forest scenery to do as we have often done, and go up beyond Emery Down where



SWAN GREEN, NEW FOREST

the high wood gives place to more open spaces clothed with heather and green-grey whortle bushes, and in damp spots with cotton grass with its silver-white tufts, for here one sees the trees not in dense masses, but in small groups or single examples, and is able to enjoy the exquisite effects of distances, in the Forest so seldom possible, on the limits of which far off there is an indistinct screen of dense woods.

In this particular part the beech is seen in all its glory of youthfulness, maturity and picturesque decay. The first-named shapely and exquisitely beautiful ; the second, nobly impressive ; and the third with masses of dense foliage leading up to the leafless branches, which, in a tracery of bare grey limbs, rise towards the sky. For the tree dies first from the top.

In this part of the forest stand, in groups and isolated specimens, some of the finest trees that are to be found within its boundaries, and even if one may not be learned in woodland lore few wanderers in its solitude can fail to be attracted by their beauty of form and foliage, and amazed at their size.

A little more than two miles beyond Emery Down one comes across a small valley very typical of a certain variety of forest scenery. It is flat, showing a vast expanse of heather rendered greyish in tint by the lichen covering it, and in the more swampy portions cotton grass grows, while through the valley there meanders a dark, peaty, forest stream with many twists and turns. Here and there are masses of alders and tiny oaks, stunted and almost rotting from their uncongenial struggle for life in a sour soil made

yet more uncongenial by too much water. It is a dreary spot at any time save the height of summer, when it has a weird beauty of its own, and some life comes into the picture in the shape of water fowl and other birds, and here and there a small herd of shaggy forest ponies of the wilder sort cropping the grass growing along the morass, and, perhaps with memories of lost companions, engulfed in the bog, testing carefully their steps as they go.

One of the most startling features of this valley of no-man's land is the contrast of its colour scheme with those of the lawns and high woods through which we have come from Lyndhurst up to Emery Down. In the latter one enjoys brilliant tints in spring, summer and autumn, while here it is a landscape in monochrome ranging through grey to black. In summer, however, Nature makes an attempt even in this desolate valley at brightness, and the fringe of the dark streamlet is made gay with golden marsh marigolds and kingcups, and other smaller flowers, the beauty of which needs to be examined at close quarters to be appreciated.

On the other side of the ridge lies a very different stream with bright sparkling waters passing in many places over a gravel bed. This is the Lymington river, and along its bank and purer water the forest trees have grown to beauty and maturity, and seem in summer-time to smile down at the glancing stream as it goes on its way to the sea at Lymington Haven, through still pools, in which trout lurk,

and pebbled reaches causing it to make water music which falls pleasantly upon the ear.

This Lymington river is a true Forest stream, for it rises in the Forest, passes through it between rounded banks of turf and moss, in summer-time starred with many wild flowers, beautiful with meadowsweet and forget-me-nots, and widening as it goes along. Often in winter and during heavy rains it overflows its banks, and in many places washes clean and free of earth the roots of the vast beeches and other trees which stand upon or near its banks. Then comes a gale, and here and there one of the great giants of the Forest crashes to earth and falls sometimes across the stream, providing a natural bridge for wandering pedestrians, and for the furry folk of the Forest to cross from side to side.

In this part of the Forest one meets in summer with some of its rarest and largest birds. There are still plenty of owls, and contrary to the common belief these can be heard very often at noon. Here and there as the wayfarer listens he can also catch the harsh voices of the jays, apparently in eternal dispute; the laughter-like call of the woodpecker, the note of the cock-pheasant, and the voice of the cuckoo away down some glade.

Along some of the less frequented paths one may come now and then suddenly upon a derelict charcoal burner's hut; built, though much smaller, very much on the lines of a Zulu kraal, surrounded by a large circle of brushwood, and a rough fence made of posts and rails. If one comes

across it in the charcoal burning season the owner will probably be busy just outside, where he has what is known in the Forest as the burning circle. Generally the furnishing of these huts is simplicity itself. In a derelict hut upon which we some years ago stumbled on one of our many visits to the Forest, there was a large mattress-like sack stuffed with dry beech leaves as bed, a roughly made and low table, a couple of tin pannikins, and a big iron pot doubtless used for cooking. In such a hut lived "Brusher" Mills, a well-known Forest character who gained his living by adder hunting. On one of the last occasions we saw him he was tramping along the Brockenhurst road with a whole string of adders hung upon a pole. A weird uncouth figure, with his long beard blowing about in the breeze.

What "Brusher" Mills did not know of the Forest was to use a common phrase "not worth knowing." He passed the greater part of his life in a hut which he had built, scorning, at the time we knew him, even the luxury of the beech leaf bed or a wooden door with which to keep out the winter blasts. Remarkably healthy, he lived with practically a plank bed for his resting-place, and a big bundle of heather for a door.

CHAPTER II

FOREST VILLAGE —BOLDRE AND ITS CELEBRITY—AN HISTORIC
LITTLE TOWN—A SEA-WASHED FORTRESS KING CHARLES I.

BROCKENHURST, which one reaches from Lyndhurst along a delightful Forest road cut through a most picturesque part of the Forest, and affording the lover of foliage in spring, summer and autumn many vistas of charm and delight, is unlike Lyndhurst, which prides itself upon being a town, a true Forest village notwithstanding the fact that it has of late years grown considerably. The three-and-a-half miles or so of road one travels to reach it is very straight ; almost, indeed, as curveless as though the Romans had made it. To-day it is pleasantest in the off-tourist season, for we would be sorry to say how many motor-cars and motor char-a-bancs nowadays tear along it either up or down the slope to and from Lyndhurst in the twelve hours of each summer's day.

Quite close to this road, in the woods on either side, are some of the finest and oldest of the Forest oaks in this particular part. Those who have penetrated into Whitley Wood cannot fail to have been surprised and delighted with the magnificent old oaks ; not of great height but with enormous trunks and branches twisted and contorted into all imaginable shapes, most of which have stood there from the Middle Ages at least. They provide, indeed, a great

contrast to the straight, slim trees found in the neighbourhood of Doles Wood or Harewood, in the lower half of the latter of which the old Roman road to Winchester can be traced. One can touch the lower limbs of these great trees in Whitley Wood, on which grow great masses of the polypody fern, and thick patches of exquisite moss.

The little woods of birches, which also here and there border the Lyndhurst to Brockenhurst road, are in their way veterans, having lost much of the exquisite silveriness of youth, and showing a bark mostly black and rugged, but on the other hand in May and early June making a show of delicate foliage in pleasant contrast to the heavier leafage of neighbouring trees. Few roads of a like length in Forestland compare, we think, with that along which we travel from Lyndhurst to Brockenhurst. There is an extraordinary variety of form in both the living and the dead trees. Here, too, the bracken grows to immense height, in some places almost capable of hiding a tall man standing upright ; and by the little streams and in damper patches of the Forest one has thick clumps of the foxglove rearing its spikes of white and speckled pink blossoms, in some cases, higher than the head of a tall man.

In the autumn, when the trees are at their loveliest as regards tints and gorgeous colour, there comes into this stretch of road touches of life and picturesqueness, in the form of the great pigs of the commoners browsing beneath the oak trees in search of acorns, while in most seasons one catches glimpses of groups of ponies roaming among the

woods and adding a sylvan touch to make the scene complete. Though the ponies are wild, one can approach them quite close, and of late years the motor-horns that at first used to send them galloping into the recesses of the Forest now no longer appear to disturb them.

The entry into Brockenhurst village is made across a tiny stream that eventually empties itself into the Solent at Lymington, and is known as the Lymington river. The village of recent times has lost some at least of its picturesque ; but still possesses great charm on account of its surroundings. Except for one or two charming and thatched cottages, one especially near the level crossing which takes one on the Lymington road, an old church with a Norman door and ancient font, situated on a rising knoll along a by-road set a little way south-east of the main village and approached by a pretty lane, Brockenhurst has no antiquarian interests.

The little church is, indeed, a Forest shrine ringed in by oaks between which lie the graves of the churchyard, in spring beautified by clumps of primroses that have apparently crept in from the wood. Against and overshadowing the tower is a giant yew, still vigorous, with a solid stem some six yards in girth reaching half-way up the spire of the church, and in front of the tree are the fragments of an enormous oak.

Much of the church is very old, the nave, font and south porch are undoubtedly Norman, the chancel Early English, and other portions of the building generally supposed to

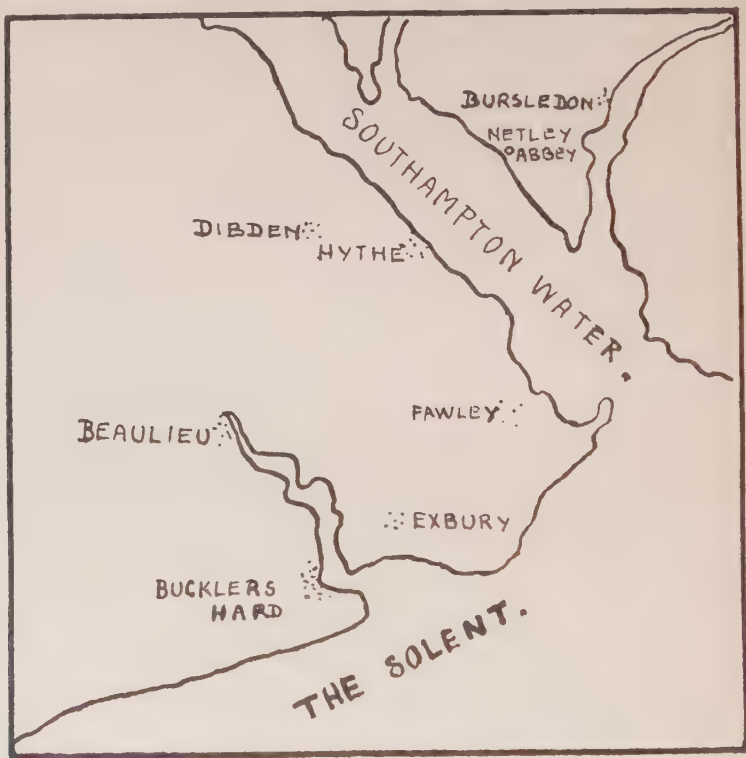
be Saxon. The tower and extinguisher-shaped spire, surmounted by a weathercock, are not in character with the rest of the building and are modern. The interior of the church is very plain, the font is an ancient one, with quaint figures, somewhat similar to that of Winchester. One of the most interesting facts in connection with the church is that it is the only one remaining of the many which were once standing in the Forest specifically mentioned in "Domesday Book." It was at Brockenhurst that John Howard, the prison reformer, lived for some time at Watcombe Farm. The name Brockenhurst is derived from "Bracken Hurst" meaning "Fern Wood" or "Fern Thicket."

Though the little village of Boldre has not much of interest historically, it is worth making a divergence from the main road to Lymington to visit it. It is three miles from Brockenhurst and situated on the banks of the Lymington river. One's way to it lies eastward from Brockenhurst Church for about a mile and a half, at which point a pretty road is reached turning sharply south to Boldre. Beyond the river and Boldre Bridge a narrow lane leads up the wooded hill to Boldre Church standing amid ash and elm; which forest lore tells us means that the edge of the Forest has been reached, for the latter trees, it is said, grow only on cultivated lands. The church is that of St. John, and it dates back to very early times before "Domesday Book," but was rebuilt in the thirteenth century, and somewhat carelessly restored about seventy years ago.

Two centuries ago its low embattled tower was considerably altered.

One enters the quiet churchyard, surrounded by its wooden-paled fence, either through the gate or up a flight of wooden steps which when brought almost to a level with the top of the fence descend on the other side. Architecturally, Boldre Church has nothing of very great interest, and historically, very little is known about it, but it has at least one claim to fame in that William Gilpin, the author of "Forest Sketches" and other works of considerable charm, was for thirty years vicar of the parish, whilst Warner, the county historian, was once curate here. It is interesting also to note that Southey, the author of many works, including a life of Nelson, was in 1843 married in the church to Caroline Bowles, also a writer, chiefly remembered by her book, "Chapters on Churchyards." The cottage in which she used to live stands near the road, close to the old Roman earthworks known as Buckland Rings. In 1777 when William Gilpin came first to Boldre he found, so we gather from a contemporary writer, things were far from being as they should, owing very largely to the neglect of his predecessor. The villagers were tempted in many ways to indulge in poaching and robbery from their nearness to the deer, game, and fuel of the forest. Indeed, it would appear that the Reverend William Gilpin's parishioners were at that time little more than a collection of brigands. The state of things existing, records of those times prove, was not unusual in many of the villages and hamlets on

the borders of waste lands and forests, even as recently as the latter part of the eighteenth century. The writer of "Forest Sketches" did certainly much for the parishioners



SOLENT DISTRICT.

over whom he was set to rule, and that his influence was good there was, we are told, "great evidence." He did not, however, in chiding the poor gloss over the peccadilloes of the rich, for the record exists that a wealthy farmer of the neighbourhood, who became notorious for his scandalous

living, after many warnings from the Rev. Gilpin and appeals to amend his ways, was banned in the spiritual Court, and a sentence of excommunication was only allowed to lapse on condition that he did public penance. And so in this little church, towards the end of the eighteenth century, he and the frail woman who was his companion in evil-living confessed their wrong doing, and expressed their contrition clad in the unusual penitential garb of white sheets.

But active in parish work as was this zealous vicar he was no less so in regard to literary things. He was a contemporary of Gilbert White of Selborne, and to him and men of his type a big debt is owed for their contributions of books dealing with local scenery, customs and natural history. During his thirty years residence he did for the Forest similar service to that which White did for Selborne. He often wrote in the open air in the wood adjoining the Vicarage.

In the churchyard on Gilpin's gravestone is to be found one of those quaint and lengthy epitaphs so popular at the period of his death. It tells how the vicar, who lived to be eighty, and his wife, two years his senior, are buried together safe from the dangerous enjoyments of life, and how after half a century of happy wedded life they hope to be raised in God's good time "through the atonement of a Blessed Redeemer, for their repeated transgressions, to a state of joyful immortality." Notwithstanding the somewhat evil reputation of the parishioners when their

vicar came first among them there is a quaint testimonial to the improvement in their habits in the lines, " Here it will be a new joy to meet several of their good neighbours who now lye scattered in these sacred precincts around them."

The village itself with its trim thatched cottages straggling along a tortuous lane to Pilley Street and Pilley Bailey on the edge of Beaulieu Heath is distant from the church half a mile. In the neighbourhood is the beautiful Boldre Wood, a great resort of picnic parties.

One can reach Lymington by the bridge which crosses the Lymington river at Boldre, one of those quaint and substantial structures—in this case having four arches—which possibly owe their origin or at least their foundations to the enterprise of the monks of old. Lymington river from this bridge flows through a narrow valley, the edges of which are marshy and flanked by low hills or rising ground. Close by is a forge or smithy formerly, one may believe, more frequented and busy than to-day. An old inhabitant told us that in former times it was, as he phrased it, " the gossip shop of the neighbourhood," and there are certainly traditions if nothing more of the farrier who occupied the smithy in the latter days of the eighteenth and early days of the nineteenth century having been a good friend to the smugglers, who used to come from the coast along the Boldre Road, and the afore-mentioned narrow and winding lane.

In summer-time Boldre Bridge is a delightful spot, and more artists than one would imagine have found out the

remote spot and transferred its beauties of river and lily pools to their canvases.

One comes soon to Lymington, and in doing so passes Walhampton House, creeper-clad and peaceful-looking, standing at the angle of the wood, and for centuries the home of the Burrards, a family very intimately connected with the history of the ancient borough. As long ago as 1397 one of them, a John (when the name was spelt Borard), was made Prior of Christchurch, and from the time that the name appears first on the existing roll of the burgesses of Lymington the family has played a great part in the public life of the town, supplying a long line of Burrards to fill offices of burgess, mayor, and Member of Parliament in succession.

Lymington with its High Street, built on a steep incline and dipping down to the river, is a very charming and picturesque little town, once a popular and flourishing centre of yachting, and now posing as a seaside place, although a mile or two from the Solent coast. It has a railway connection with Brockenhurst by a loop line, and there is a ferry service to Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight all the year round, and in summer to Ryde, Portsmouth and other places on the Solent. It is this line of railway and ferry service that has doubtless served to keep Lymington from becoming an almost derelict little town, to which its remote situation off any main road running east and west along the coast would have contributed.

The earliest charter possessed by Lymington—for it seems that it never had one direct from the Crown—was received from Baldwin de Redvers, who granted the burgesses their freedom with the condition that they undertook their own defence.

The town enjoys the distinction of being a borough by prescription, and its rights in this respect are said to date back before the days of Richard I. It was Queen Elizabeth who granted Parliamentary representation to the burgesses, and it so happened that a member of the Burrard family held the office of mayor, and was thus enabled to assist very materially in the return of any candidate he favoured, and also to influence his successor in the mayoralty. For in those days the mayor named one of the three from whom the burgesses had to select the next holder of the office, and a name once inserted on the Pricking Book stood there until the owner either became mayor or died. In those far-off days only burgesses were entitled to vote in Parliamentary elections, and it therefore followed that the party having municipal power was also able to control the colour of the Borough politically, as they could elect their own supporters and enrol their own friends as honorary burgesses.

Formerly Lymington was a considerable port and saw, during the Napoleonic Wars, many hasty comings and goings, and at times considerable excitement. Nowadays it is just a pleasant, rather sleepy, little town with the river running down a steely-grey strip between its beds of rushes, through broad marshes beyond the little harbour. It is tidal, and

with the ebb becomes a very narrow stream, with flat mud banks partly covered by green wrack grass.

There is still an amount of yacht building done, and vessels of some tonnage come alongside the somewhat sleepy quays, and as one stands at the pier head, from which the small steamers start on their voyage down the winding channel to the Solent and across to the Isle of Wight, one hears the hammering of the shipbuilders, and the soft purr of the steam-saws cutting into the timber.

The church of St. Thomas á Becket, surmounted by a Georgian cupola, with some traces of fourteenth century work in it, which stands ivy-covered in the main street amid a row of irregular houses of some picturesque quaintness, is traditionally believed to have been burned by the Parliamentary troops during the Civil War. But no actual record exists to support this traditional story, although it is certain that the Parliamentarians and Royalists did bring ruin and poverty on the town during the struggle.

The church saw many vicissitudes during the years of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries, and was restored in 1874. It has, however, little of architectural interest, although the avenue of lime trees are said to date from about the time of the Civil War, and some of the oldest of the tombstones from the same period. The stories of the tombstones in the churchyard of this, till comparatively recent years, half-derelict church, have great possibilities of romance, for there are many memorials of families once powerful but now forgotten ; of soldiers and

sailors ; and even of some foreign refugees who may have crossed the Channel, and settled in Lymington during the early part of the French Revolution. The church was enlarged in 1756, 1792, and in the year before Waterloo, when, as was then the practice, some of the new seats provided were sold. The parish book gives curious details of the sale of the seats by public auction " which said pews or seats were by the Church Wardens sold to sundry persons, towards defraying the expense of the said work."

It is interesting to know that sometimes the fact that the pew commanded a fine view through the windows was mentioned as an additional attraction !

Some idea may be had of the importance of the town as a seaport in the reign of Edward III when it is remembered that Lymington contributed twice as many ships for the invasion of France as did Portsmouth.

Lymington experienced the alarm felt by all towns on the South Coast in the Armada year, for in the " towne booke " one finds an entry of money expended in 1588, and this included xijd. " led out for taking notice of Sir Edward Hoppy, night, mershall, commesham, for writing of orders of the semen, vjd." and various other items of expense connected with " the two ferst mousters," and a final one ; and also a considerable number of " querts " of liquor which had to be provided for the musters of potential defenders, which " querts," it may be remarked in passing, seem never to have been omitted from any Lymington public event. A local historian tells us that possibly owing to too much liquor

and anxiety the scribe who made the entries on this particular page had his work commented upon as "cannot be read."

Lymington, as was also the case with many other South Coast towns of the old days, was more than once raided and burned by the French ; their last visit being paid in 1545 when the " pirates " landed, sacked the town, and left it in ruins.

Peeps at its history as the centuries passed show Lymington as Puritan early in the seventeenth century, for we find records of sundry provisions relating to " abusing the Sacred name of Almighty God by vain swearing and blaspheming ; and to prevent prophanation of the Lord's Daie it was enacted that annie frayte, to be transported from this town into the Isle of Wight uppon the Saboth Daie should pay a fine of ijd. to the use of the poor."

But Puritan though the Lymington people of that period seem to have been they yet saw it convenient to take part in the rejoicings which occurred throughout the country at the time of the Restoration, and the records show entries of money spent for " beere, furze faggotts, and bread for the poor " ; so the rule of Cromwell had apparently brought them no more satisfaction than did that of King Charles. But Lymington's loyalty would seem to have been always of a somewhat uncertain quality, or at any rate was during the seventeenth century, for when Monmouth landed at Lyme Regis on June 11th, 1685, the mayor of that day raised a body of horse in his support.

One of the old red brick houses standing opposite the church is known as "Monmouth House," by reason of a tradition that after Sedgemoor the Duke escaped and hid at Lymington. There seems little ground for the tradition, as it is known that the Duke was captured in a ditch at Shag Heath, near Wimborne, Dorset, and would have had little reason had he ever reached Lymington to have returned inland. There is probably far more ground, seeing that Lymington raised a company of horse on the Duke's support, for the tale that a band of his followers used to meet in Monmouth House, and whilst talking there were surprised by a party of King's troops and escaped through the presence of mind of the owner of the house, who was a lady of resource. When she realised that the fumes of tobacco and the odour of punchbowl, with which the plotters had been regaling themselves, might lead to their detection "she simulated a cold and toothache, and sat with her head wrapped up in flannel, and with a steam kettle and pipe, thus delaying the disappointed soldiery sufficiently to enable her late visitors to escape, and at the same time give a plausible excuse for the tobacco smoke and smell of liquor."

Lymington enjoyed a faint flicker of returning prosperity in the middle half of the eighteenth century when some Hessian troops were quartered there, and there was the usual junketing, gaiety and life that the presence of soldiers quartered in a town always bring. There still stands in St. Thomas's Street a delightful old seventeenth century tiled house, virginia-creeper clad, called "Quadrille Court,"

the name of which preserves that of a game popular in the latter half of the eighteenth century, said to have been played there by the officers. About the time that George III and his Court did so much to popularize the Dorset seaport of Weymouth by indulgence in the then newly fashionable practice of sea-bathing, Lymington was brought into fashion for a like purpose, although as a matter of fact actual sea-bathing is not to be had there, as there is neither a beach of sand nor shingle, and so much of the sea as there is only comes up to the town over the mud flats of the Estuary. There is at least, even to the present day, a traditional and good story relating to the visit paid the town by King George III. It would appear on that auspicious occasion the mace-bearer, quite ignorant of the correct ceremonial prevailing at such times, and anxious to be in no way lacking in either observance of ceremony or loyalty of welcome, dressed in all his garb of office, prostrated himself before the perplexed King with the words, "I am like a beast before thee." A "humble address," which, it is said, evoked a broad smile upon the somewhat bucolic countenance of His Majesty, and led to roars of laughter on the part of his immediate circle.

At sunset and at sunrise one often gets very beautiful pictures on the Lymington river, and also across the glistening mud flats, which the tide leaves exposed, but which are kept wet and shining by the multitudes of little rivulets coursing down from the banks and pouring their water into the main stream.

The little town with its old-world main street, with here and there Georgian houses interspersed with more modern buildings, has an almost pathetic air. Lymington has declined considerably in importance since the heyday of its prosperity ; the decline has arisen from several causes, one of the earliest being a law making it necessary for all foreign goods to be landed at Southampton ; this had the effect of diverting much trade, which was never recovered even when the restriction regarding foreign goods was removed. Then there was the salt trade, dating, so historians tell us, from the fourth century, and flourishing even in the early years of the last century. This, owing to various causes, has become almost extinct ; though traces of the ancient salterns are still discernible. Another cause was the fact that Lymington did not move with the times which immediately succeeded its brief period of popularity as a fashionable bathing resort. No effort was made to accommodate the visitors who came in increasing numbers, and so those of less than a century ago gradually turned their faces further westward to Bournemouth, then in its infancy, and other more enterprising resorts.

Along the coast south-west of Lymington on a high bar of shingle, which juts out half the distance across the Solent from the Hampshire shore directly opposite Totland Bay on the Isle of Wight, stands Hurst Castle. It is quite outside the New Forest of to-day and seldom, indeed, visited, although in former times it was within it, as was also the whole of the coast line hereabouts.



HURST CASTLE FROM KEY HAVEN.

The old stronghold of Hurst is still of some importance, and historically is interesting from the fact that Charles I was confined there for a few days on his way from Carisbrooke Castle to Windsor. How the King received the news on November 29th, 1648, that he was to be removed thither from the Isle of Wight, and an account of his journey, is preserved in the MS. in the British Museum. We are told : “ In the morning just at daybreak the King heard a great knocking at his dressing room door, and sent the Duke of Richmond to know what it meant ; he, on enquiring who was there, was answered, ‘ One Mildmay,’ (one of the servants the Parliament had put to the King, and brother to Sir Henry). The Duke demanded to know what he would have, was answered ‘ There are some gentlemen from the Army very anxious to speak with the King.’ The knocking increasing the King demanded the Duke to let them into his dressing room. No sooner was this done, but before the Duke got out of his bed, those officers rushed into the chamber and abruptly told the King they had orders to remove him. ‘ From whom ? ’ said the King. They answered, ‘ From the Army.’ The King asked whither he was to be removed, they answered ‘ To the Castle.’ The King asked, ‘ What Castle ? ’ They again answered ‘ To the Castle.’ ‘ *The Castle,*’ said the King, ‘ is no castle.’

“ He then told them he was well enough prepared for any castle, and required them to name the castle. After a short whispering together they said, ‘ Hurst Castle.’ The King replied, ‘ They could not well name a worse,’ and called for

the Duke of Richmond to send for the Earl of Lindsay and Colonel Cook.

“ These were not, however, called, although the officers promised to send for both. We are told ‘ the horses being come they hurried him (the King) away, only permitting the Duke to attend him about two miles, and then told him that he must go no further ; and when he sadly took his leave, being scarcely permitted to kiss the King’s hand, whose last words were ‘ Remember me to my Lord Lindsay and Colonel Cook ; and command Colonel Cook from me never to forget the passage of this night.’ And so in the course of a few hours the King came to Hurst Castle ; and a few days later, on December 7th, he was awakened at midnight in his cell, and told that Colonel Harrison was come for him. He exclaimed to Herbert, ‘ Do you not know that this is the man who intended to assassinate me ? It is a place fit for such a deed.’

“ The King was taken to Windsor that night, and next month was executed before Whitehall.”

CHAPTER III.

THE SOLENT COAST—SOUTHAMPTON WATER AND THE TEST VALLEY
TO ROMSEY ABBEY AND SOME BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES.

WHILE there are many pretty inlets along the Hampshire coast from Hurst Castle to the Sussex border, it cannot be claimed to have the variety or the grandeur of some portions of the seaboard counties which lie east and west of it. Here the wayfarer has the beauty of low green cliffs, inlets, and estuaries of small rivers ; and, along the wide, deep stretch of Southampton Water, pleasant little water-side towns and villages, picturesque chiefly because all such places usually have an old-world air, and give the impression of remoteness from the more strenuous things of life.

The land from Lymington Harbour mouth to quaintly named Needs Oar Point, at the entrance to Beaulieu river, is mostly of the nature of flat marshes with a low foreshore, and is traversed by leafy green lanes, pleasant in themselves, but from which one obtains only very occasional vistas northward of the Forest, or southward of the Solent and the distant Isle of Wight.

There are two roads from Lymington to Buckler's Hard. One is more or less direct, passing Walhampton House and then along the coast less than a mile inland past Pylewell House, and Sowley Pond and Forge, and then turning inland

and northwards to the cross-roads, and through quaintly named Bergerie, to St. Leonards, and thence to Buckler's Hard. The more usual way—we have travelled both—is to take the road running from Lymington as far as Pylewell House, and then, turning sharply northward, to Beaulieu across the heath. One passes across bog and moor with here and there wooded dells ; northward lie the great woods on the outskirts of the Forest, and enclosures which have been planted with maples, red oak and other ornamental trees.

The heath stretches out on either side of the gravelled road, broken here and there with knots of red-barked pine, and so until one comes to the hill above the green well-wooded valley through which the Beaulieu river flows on its way to the sea. The descent into Beaulieu village is picturesque, and even in these days of many motor char-a-banc excursions Beaulieu has not been able quite to shake off that air of remoteness which is one of its chief charms. First of all one sees the tiled roofs of the village with overshadowing trees, many of the houses creeper-clad, and at last one reaches the picturesque "Montagu Arms," in summer-time the scene of so much imported and alien animation. Close by stands the grey stone Palace House, a glimpse of which one catches through the trees, and also vistas of the little lake hard by, on which swans float, and to which in winter many waterfowl come.

From near the Palace House gates there is a lovely view of the head of the Creek, which gradually broadens out on its way to join the Solent. In this lovely and peaceful

spot was founded by King John, very early in the thirteenth century, a great Cistercian Abbey, which was completed by his son and successor, Henry III. Of the once great Abbey only a few fragments remain. There is a legend that once there was a causeway, passable at low tide, stretching from Lepe on the eastward side of the Beaulieu river estuary to the Isle of Wight, and tradition also says that the stones for the building of the Abbey were brought from the island in carts along this causeway.

The Abbey, which is one of the most beautifully situated in the South of England, owed its origin, so the legend states, to a dream of King John. According to this some members of the Cistercian Order having greatly angered the King were summoned by him to Lincoln, where he then was, with the amiable intention on his part of seeing them trodden to death by horses. However, the monks escaped owing to the refusal of the soldiers to carry out the King's barbarous orders, and at night the latter dreamt that he was condemned at the Last Judgment to be scourged by the monks he had intended to slay. This dream made so deep an impression upon his mind that he determined to found an Abbey for the benefit of the Monks of the Cistercian Order as a propitiatory act to the Almighty. Exquisitely situated, Beaulieu, which means "fair spot," was the result, set amid primeval forest trees, and washed by the meadow-bordered waters of the river Exe, here widening out into Beaulieu Creek. Many readers will remember that two of the opening scenes in Conan Doyle's fine historical romance, "The White

Company," are set in Beaulieu ; and, indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more tempting setting for the romancer's art. One can well imagine the community which gathered here in the shadow of the great Forest, with pleasant lands—



ROMSEY DISTRICT.

some of them cultivated then as vineyards—surrounding the Abbey, and that great necessity, a sheet of water, from which to draw their fish supplies near at hand.

The privilege of sanctuary was conferred upon the Abbey by Pope Innocent IV about the year 1235. In the case of

Beaulieu sanctuary was claimed on several occasions. Among the celebrated people seeking protection may be mentioned the Countess of Warwick, wife of the King Maker, who took refuge there in April, 1471, after landing at Southampton from France, and learning the death and defeat of her husband by Edward IV at the Battle of Barnet a few days earlier. The next to take sanctuary was Margaret of Anjou, who had landed at Weymouth on the day of the Battle of Barnet with reinforcements for her husband, Henry VI. Then came Perkin Warbeck, of ridiculous memory, the tool of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy and the Yorkists, who also took sanctuary at Beaulieu in September, 1497, to which place he had fled on the approach of the forces of Henry VII. At the time of the suppression of the Abbey, in 1539-40, there were no less than 32 men, some with wives and families, living for protection within its walls.

After its dissolution as a religious house the beautiful Abbey and its lands experienced various vicissitudes, ultimately passing successively into the possession of Thomas Wriothesley, afterwards created Earl of Southampton; into that of Lord Montagu by marriage; and into the family of the Duke of Buccleuch, also by marriage; and lastly it was setted, in 1884, by the then Duke on his second son, who afterwards was created Baron Montagu by Queen Victoria.

The Abbey ruins are less extensive than is the case with many institutions of a similar character destroyed about the same time; but it is still possible for the intelligent student to gain a fair idea of the great proportions of the original

building. Anciently the grounds immediately surrounding the Abbey had an area of more than a mile and a quarter. The church, only a fragment of which remains, originally consisted of a lengthy nave, side aisles, transepts with aisles, an apsed choir, and a lofty central tower crowning the whole. The length of the building was not less than 360 feet. One can well imagine this magnificent church set amid surroundings of unrivalled beauty, an oasis of culture and of peace in what was in those days a wild and turbulent district. The monks made their own wine, and it is said that grapes from the original vineyards were gathered here as late as the middle of the eighteenth century. The remains of the old wine-press are still visible about eighty yards to the north of the church. The chief ruins are three beautifully constructed and pointed arches standing near the private burying-ground of the Montagu family. There are also remains of the monkish dormitories communicating with the church, and of the kitchen.

The present parish church, which contains a curious old stone pulpit, supposed to be the oldest in the country, and approached by flights of steps in the arcaded wall, is an early English building, formerly the refectory or dining-hall of the monks. It possesses a groined roof with some curious carvings, originally painted, which have been carefully restored.

What was once the Abbots' Palace is now the seat of Lord Montagu ; it was converted into a private residence by the first secular owner ; but since then has undergone



Beaulieu Abbey.

Douglas Snowdon

GATEWAY, BEAULIEU ABBEY.

many periods of reconstruction, resulting in the present castle-like building. In the early part of the first decade of the eighteenth century the first Duke of Montagu surrounded the house by a quadrangular wall and moat ; with towers at each corner. These defensive measures were taken in anticipation of possible attacks by French privateers, whose vessels could easily have sailed a considerable way up Beaulieu river, and whose ancestors, indeed, in far off days had several times attacked the neighbouring town of Lymington.

About three miles down the river is St. Leonards, formerly the chief grange of the Abbey, where are the remains of an immense barn 226 feet long, 77 feet broad, and 60 feet in height, and close by are also the ruins of an early English chapel, stone vaulted, and divided into two portions by a stone screen.

No one should go to Beaulieu without visiting Buckler's Hard, which lies on the western bank of Beaulieu Creek, about two miles below Beaulieu itself. A path with delightful views of the creek takes one to this derelict village, which a little more than a century ago was, unbelievable as it may seem to-day, an important naval shipbuilding yard. Beaulieu river has four tides, not two, and thus it presents a rapidly changing aspect of silvery flood and ebb, and the latter leaves the bed with patches of yellow gravel, and here and there little pools and saltings where sea fowl and other birds disport themselves and feed, and squadrons of glistening white plumage swans sail to and fro.

It is a romantic spot, this river, with its many tiny winding creeks which in some instances run up into the woods themselves.

Into it, in the old days, crept Danish galleys, and later on French pirates intent upon attacking and despoiling the rich Abbey of Beaulieu, of which, alas, so few traces now remain.

The woods clothing the river banks are probably no less ancient than the most historic portion of the New Forest itself, for there seems little doubt that the land here was well-wooded ground since the beginning of history. So broad is the stream, even at a short distance below Beaulieu Creek, that there is little else but the fact of its tide to suggest that it is other than an inland lake; and certainly nothing in its silent, tree-clad hills to apprise the wanderer, either upwards from the sea or downwards by the banks from Beaulieu, of the existence of such a village as comes suddenly into view round the bend of the river. Almost hidden from the sight and knowledge of man are the ruined and melancholy remains of the little town which once was a busy hive of industry, and literally a cradle of the British Navy of Nelson's time, and in the single street of red brick dwellings—once more numerous, now weathered by the wind, sun and rain of passing years—is the romantic memorial of the days of "the wooden walls of old England," when Napoleon, the "great shadow," dominated Europe.

It was in the middle of the eighteenth century that John, Duke of Montagu, who owned the vast and prosperous sugar

island of St. Vincent, and inherited the ancient rights of the Abbots of Beaulieu to a free harbour upon the river, conceived the idea of making a seaport upon its banks at Buckler's Hard. His methods were characterized by great foresight, and soon the grants of land, which he was prepared to make at a merely nominal rent, and the free delivery of timber from the New Forest, proved the means of starting what afterwards became not only a prosperous but even a noted shipbuilding yard.

The name of Buckler's Hard or Quay was derived from a local family named Buckle, although no one of the name became intimately connected with the shipbuilding industry. Close to an immense supply of magnificent timber, and to the then famous ironworks of Sowley, it was little to be wondered at that the Duke's scheme ultimately had quite as satisfactory an issue as he had hoped.

The fact that ships could leave the river in any wind was advertised widely, thus demonstrating the advantages that it had over other places—such as Bristol on the Severn and the Thames ports. This and other claims of special facilities that were made had the effect of attracting to the place a firm, Wyatt & Co., by name, who set up carpenters' shops, slipways, forges, and other things necessary to shipbuilding, at a spot of hitherto almost primeval solitude, where great and young oaks grew side by side almost to the water's edge; and where, but for the occasional boom of the bittern, and weird and plaintive cries of the gulls, there reigned unbroken silence.

Soon all was transformed into a scene of bustle and activity with the sound of the hammer and anvil, and the hum of many voices. In September, 1743, the first battle-ship built upon the river, christened the "Surprise," of 24 guns, was launched. At this time the little village which sprang up to meet the needs of the shipbuilding industry thus started was, apparently out of compliment to the ducal owner of the river, named Montagu town. But every important mention of the place is by its first name, Buckler's Hard, and the new name must have speedily fallen into disuse.

Here were built some of the most famous ships of English naval history. And, down to the time when the great Napoleonic War ended, ship after ship was launched destined to play a gallant part in the struggle by sea which ended only with Napoleon's defeat at Trafalgar.

A family by the name of Adams, a descendant of which was not very long ago corresponding with the present writer, was very active in the designing and building of many of the ships. The name of Henry Adams, who, when thirty years of age, undertook the control of the ship-building yards, which he directed for a period of sixty-two years, first appears in a deed dated 1801 made for the firm of Adams & Co. The great success of the "Surprise" appears to have resulted in a rapid development of Buckler's Hard, and those who only know the place as the derelict village of to-day will be no doubt astonished to learn at the time of its greatest prosperity upwards of 4,000 men were engaged in the yards.



BUCKLERS HARD, BEAULIEU RIVER

The first ships designed were sloops, but the shipbuilders soon became more ambitious, for frigates and then battle-ships, were constructed and taken down the beautiful tidal river, from strangely rural surroundings, to Portsmouth to be fitted out and manned. In 1748 the "Scorpion" of 18 guns was built, and in the following year the "Woolwich" of 44 guns. After these came in rapid succession the "Kennington," "Lion," "Mermaid," the second named a 60 gun ship. A few years later the famous "Gibraltar" was built and launched, which soon afterwards captured a swift, well-armed and famous privateer which was bought in by the Government, and renamed "Gibraltar Prize."

Other noted vessels, whose stories are written large in the pages of naval history of the middle and later years of the eighteenth century, followed at intervals, including the "Cephalus," which made a prize of eleven French gunboats and a felucca without loss. In 1764 the "Europe," afterwards the Flagship in Newfoundland waters under Vice-Admiral John Montague, was launched. And ten years later the "Vigilant," a battleship of 1,374 tons, and 64 guns, and between the years 1773 and 1781 no fewer than ten ships were built and launched; among which was a vessel known as the "Garland," 28 guns, the memory of which was perpetuated in a ballad sung in the West Indies by negroes of that time:

“ You go aboard de flagship,
Dey ask you for to dine ;
Dey give you lots of salt horse,
But not a drop of wine.

You go aboard de “ Garland,”
Dey ask you for to dine ;
Dey give you plenty roast beef,
And lots of rosy wine.

Ho ! de happy, happy “ Garland,” etc.

But the most famous vessel which left the slips of this shipbuilding yard of long ago was the “ Agamemnon.” This fine vessel was commanded by Lord Nelson at the siege of Calvi (at which he lost his right eye), and afterwards carried his flag at the Battle of the Baltic. This splendid ship also played her gallant part, in company with the “ Swiftsure ” and “ Euryalus ” line of battleships in the Battle of Trafalgar.

Of the great skill of these Hampshire shipbuilders of bygone times there is no doubt, and some idea of the resources of Buckler’s Hard at about this time may be gathered from the fact that it is said a 74 gun battleship only took two and a half years to build, although more than 2,000 oaks, cut in the New Forest, some 100 tons of iron, and 30 tons of copper rivets and nails were wrought into her fabric.

On several occasions Royalty came in state to launch and christen a ship, and the King was invariably entertained in the Adams’s house. In the garden is still to be seen a

walnut tree under which he used to sit chatting with his suite.

The downfall of the Adams family, and of Buckler's Hard, was eventually brought about more through misfortune than any fault. The firm failed to carry out a Government contract to build four men-of-war in a year, and were unwise enough to go to law with the Admiralty. They lost their case and were ruined, and the prosperity of the village, which owed its very existence chiefly to the enterprise and administrative ability of Henry Adams, rapidly declined.

Nowadays of the vast sheds that once covered the shore not a trace remains, and only a heap of overgrown brickwork and rubble marks the spot where, in the busy blacksmith's shop, from sunrise to sunset, once rang the hammers on the anvils, forging bolts to hold together the great timbers of New Forest oak.

Now cattle wander down the grass grown street, which once was thronged with workmen, and along the once busy road, which skirts the river on the Buckler's Hard side, sheep browse undisturbed.

To-day occasionally excursion parties come, in launches from Southampton and Cowes, up the charming windings of the Beaulieu river; and, indeed, to come by water is one of the pleasantest modes of reaching the ruined village, and of seeing the beauties of the river's bank.

Our way, however, to some pretty, little known spots along the western bank of Southampton Water is by returning to Beaulieu, and leaving that picturesque village by the road which at first skirts the upper reaches of the river, and passes

the Palace and ruins of the Abbey in an easterly direction to Beaulieu Gate, where one goes by pleasant roads direct across the heath to the little village of Fawley. This lies pleasantly situated a mile or so inland from Southampton Water, reached across a strip of country which is strangely silent and unfrequented, where woods and heath are alternated with cultivated fields.

Marshes border the coast line, on the eastern side of the mouth of the Beaulieu river, where stands Lepe, which was once the old port of departure for the island, and where there is a shingle bank much frequented by the swans which come down the river from Beaulieu, in search of food in the shallow waters of the Estuary. South-east of Fawley, and reached by a fairly good road, on the end of a narrow spit of sand and shingle stands Calshot Castle, built by Henry VIII with stone taken from the Abbeys of Netley and Beaulieu at the Dissolution. In Tudor and early Stuart times the place was of great strength we are told, although the garrison was, we gather from documents still existing, a small one of less than twenty persons; whose pay ranged from a shilling a day for the captain, down to the apparently small sum of 6d. for the rank and file.

Fawley is a quaint little village which had a church in Anglo-Saxon times. The present building is of considerable interest, and has a very fine Norman west door, and three piscinas, with other good Norman work, and many memorials of the Drummond family. Northward from Fawley in about four miles one reaches the little port of Hythe—said to be the

Deadham Hard in the novel of that name by Lucas Malet—by a pleasant and picturesque road affording some fine views of Southampton Water, with its constant passage of ships, and ever-changing pictures of maritime life.

Near Hythe one sees some high ground, and it is worth while in one's travels through this flat but picturesque district—in which one discovers many pretty cottages and charming winding lanes—to turn off through Dibden to gain a magnificent view over Southampton Water. Below one extends a stretch of gorse and bracken sloping to the water's edge, across which one sees, made more picturesque by distance, the long front of Netley set amid the woods ; while in the foreground, up and down Southampton Water, pass all manner of craft from the gigantic Atlantic liners of 50,000 tons or more, and the great cargo steamers from across the seven seas, many of them with rust-red sides telling of much service, down to the little fishing boats with their red-brown sails, and the white-winged yachts and pleasure craft of all sizes.

The little seafaring village of Hythe is quite charming with its extraordinarily long pier, at which during the summer there is a constant coming and going of little steamers and ferry boats, linking up the placidity and old-world aspect of Hythe with the great bustling port of Southampton just across the water.

In this corner of Hampshire one has, with its exquisite views of the Solent and the Island truly a spot which may be accurately described as unknown Hampshire. In front

of one lies what Walpole admirably described as "the Southampton Sea, deep blue, glistening with silver and vessels." It is a portion of the county we have found well worth exploring, not only on account of its picturesqueness, quaintness, and air of remoteness from the hustle of modern life, but because it is still the haunt of many migrant birds.

There is much of interest—along the winding road which leads from picturesque little Hythe, past Beacon Hill, to Eling, which lies in a little creek on the western side and at the head of Southampton Water. It is the Edlinges of "Domesday Book," and there is a church of much interest; in fact, one of the two most interesting in this particular portion of Hampshire. There are quite a number of ancient customs and superstitions surviving in the Forest districts, and in late Saxon times the Manor of Eling was held under obligation to afford entertainment and lodging for the King for half a day whenever he should come to it. One finds in "Domesday Book" that at the time the great record was made Eling possessed a church, two mills, a fishery and some salt works. The present church, which has a Romanesque arch at the eastern end of the north aisle—probably a portion of the pre-Saxon building—is chiefly of the Decorated period, the Norman tower having been rebuilt in the fifteenth century. The parish registers date from 1538, and are amongst the most interesting and earliest in Hampshire.

The churchyard is delightful, though one must admit somewhat ill-kept. There are many tombstones of the eighteenth century, grey, leaning, and lichen-stained; on

which one finds all sorts of curious carvings, Cupids, grapes, hour glasses, skulls and crossbones, ships, and even weeping willows ! While between the fine elms, which shade these forgotten graves, are vistas extending over the wide flat spaces where the two rivers, the Test and Itchen, run into Southampton Water. There are quite a number of epitaphs, one of the most curious being that to a William Mansbridge of Cadnam, which runs :

“ Stop Reader pray & read my fate
What caused me life to terminate
For thieves by night when in my bed
Broke in my hous, & shot me dead.”

The road to Romsey from Eling, after crossing the railway line at Totton, can be one of two, the high road branching to the left and running north-west past Paulton Park and through Ower, and then north-east almost straight into Romsey ; or the valley road, winding somewhat irregularly between the river and the canal, passing through Nursling, which has also been known as Nutcell or Nutshalling, a little frequented village nowadays, but one with much history and not a few legends.

It has a mainly Early English Church, in the vestry of which are some interesting stone effigies. It was at this village on the Test that Winfred of Crediton, better known as St. Boniface, who was the great missionary in Central Europe of the eighth century, spent his early life in the small

Benedictine Monastery which stood by the river which is still tidal at this point, and was easily reached and destroyed—some say in the tenth century—by a party of marauding Danes. Near Nursling is the fine sixteenth century red brick house known as Grove Place, with a fine avenue of old lime trees. The ancient, creeper-clad house, with its many heraldic shields in the plaster work, rooms with fine ceilings, friezes and fireplaces, claims to have been the hunting-box to which Queen Elizabeth came in pursuit of the deer in the Forest. Some colour is given to the story because at that time it was owned by a Sir Francis Knollys, a cousin of the Queen, who wrote a history of the Isle of Wight. Unfortunately, in the early part of the nineteenth century a Dr. Edward Middleton turned the beautiful old building of that time into a private lunatic asylum, and the interior was very much injured.

The Test, which is only a tiny clear stream at Whitchurch, after a delightful course down to Romsey, and onwards through its valley, falls into Southampton Water only a few miles west of the mouth of the Itchen. It is held by anglers to be one of the finest trout streams in England, and to it come the most scientific of fly fishers. It would be difficult, indeed, to enumerate the numbers of famous sportsmen who have of recent years cast their flies on to its crystal clear waters, and have landed fish which for size and flavour are said to fear the rivalry of those of no stream in Southern England.

And so through this wide, pleasant and rich green valley which lies between the western tree-clad ridges and wild heath-

lands of the Forest, and eastward the Downs, one comes to the ancient town of Romsey, where Ethelfleda, a granddaughter of Alfred the Great, who left her father's court to lead a life of retirement, founded a religious house on an island far enough removed from the sea to give some sense of security from the raids of the Norsemen, and near enough the capital of Winchester to be in touch with the world of that day.

The whole district in the immediate neighbourhood of this ancient and picturesque town, with its many quaint cottages, with irregular roofs, and the fine old Abbey dominating the whole picture, is closely identified with King Alfred, for at Stanbridge, a short distance on the north side of the town, there stands a gabled and picturesque house, dating from the middle of the seventeenth century, which is built on land where the King's father possessed a manor. And on the other side of the valley was also a royal manor of those far-off days, given by Queen Emma to St. Swithun's after her trial by ordeal and acquittal at Winchester on a charge brought against her and Bishop Alewyn. Her ordeal, according to the fourteenth century ballad, in which the incident is recounted, was the severe one of walking down the nave of the Cathedral over nine red-hot ploughshares.

On the whole one gets one's best first impression of Romsey Abbey on entering the old-time market square, and catches a glimpse of the ancient grey squat-looking tower, with its flagstaff and weathercock surmounting it, over the roofs of the surrounding houses. The best view of all of this

ancient Abbey, when it takes on a great dignity and seems almost to obliterate the modern buildings which too closely surround it, is obtained when one takes a backward view of it on leaving the town, travelling along the beautiful main Salisbury road towards Sherfield English. Along this road, from a hill above the Test valley, one gets such a view as is not easily forgotten of this great conventual church, which is one of the finest in the whole of the South of England.

Perhaps it is only the serious student of architecture who will appreciate to the full the lesson of architectural development conveyed by Romsey Abbey. There are fragments of different periods, but all incorporated so wonderfully that the effect of the whole is one of great perfection. That there are flaws, discoverable on careful and prolonged investigation by those who have knowledge of architectural detail, is incontrovertible; but for the ordinary beholder Romsey leaves upon the mind a delightful memory of beauty and gracious age.

Curiously enough, of this fine old church very little history is known. No one knows who planned it, who were the pious donors who gave the means by which it was built, what workers were responsible for the beautiful details of arches and mouldings, who did the wonderful carvings, or what inventive genius imagined the extraordinarily varied figures upon the corbels, whose faces represent fair women and cowled monks, and depict all human emotions—avarice, pride, suffering, amusement, and humour—all set amid intricate devices of foliated scroll and chevron.



Market Place, Romsey.

MARKET PLACE, ROMSEY.

One might spend a whole day, indeed, in attempting to search out something of the history of the church from the mixture of its styles, and the variety of its details. Probably it was mainly built in the first half of the twelfth century by Henry de Blois, or at least that he was responsible to a considerable extent for the designing of the church. But it had many builders, and, indeed, one of the most interesting methods of studying its development is to commence at the east end where there exists the rougher and earlier work, which authorities state is probably a portion of additions made to the Saxon Abbey, and pass on to the Early English bays found at the western end of the nave aisles.

The probability is that the present building was erected bit by bit round the older one, parts of which at successive stages were incorporated. The Abbey was such an important one during both the Saxon and Norman periods that little surprise need be felt at its beauty, and its size.

A succession of women of royal and noble birth entered this nunnery, of whom Edward the Elder's daughter was the first. It is even possible she occupied the high position of Abbess. Ethelfleda, Alfred's granddaughter, already mentioned, was said to be the daughter of the Ealdorman Athelwold, who had left his Sydmonton property to Romsey Abbey, and there it was that Edgar placed Ethelfleda, who was orphaned and portionless, in the charge of the Irish Abbess, Morwenna. Here she remained till after the death of the Abbess, within a few months of which event the Danes under Sweyn came up the Test, attacked and left the Abbey in ruins.

Warned, it is said, by a dream, the Abbess Elvina, who had succeeded Morwenna, had fled with her nuns to Winchester.

Ethelfleda, to whom are attributed many miracles, and who ultimately became a saint, succeeded the Abbess Elwina. But by far the most romantic story in connection with the Abbey is that of the Scottish Princess Matilda, a daughter of Malcolm Canmore, who, with her sister, was brought to Romsey and left in charge of the Abbess Christina. The story goes that William Rufus himself came to the Abbey to court the Princess, but the Abbess not being favourable to Rufus's advances dressed her niece in the garb of a nun, and cleverly saw that Rufus was taken to see the roses in the Abbey garden, and did not enjoy any opportunity of courting the young lady of whose beauty he had heard.

Seven years later the royal suitor met his death in the neighbourhood of his hunting-box at Castle Malwood, near which spot there is a pond said to turn blood-red on each anniversary of the King's death. His successor, his brother Henry I, also smitten with the charms of the Scottish Princess, came hastening to Romsey to seek her hand, the difficulty was for the lady to rid herself of the veil, and the vows that she had taken. But a conference called at Lambeth, of prelates and men learned in matters of church doctrine and discipline, decided that the young lady could be allowed to wed the King. This she did, and passed into the pages of history as Good Queen Maud.

Yet another romantic wooing in connection with this ancient Abbey. This time of Mary de Blois, who had taken

full vows, and had been Abbess for some five years when by her brother's death she became the heiress of Boulogne. She was carried off by Count Matthew of Alsace, causing a great scandal, and a storm of protest by the Church at the impious breaking of its laws. For ten years the ex-Abbess lived in Flanders, and then she left her husband, and her two young daughters, and shut herself up for the rest of her life in a convent in the little walled town of Montreuil, near Boulogne. There we are told "she wrought, and endeavoured by fasting and penances to save her imperilled soul."

The Abbey at Romsey, it may be remarked, had, so far as records and legends inform us, a very checkered and, from a Church point of view, unsatisfactory history. It became a favourite "retreat," especially with the nobility, and if one can apply the term a fashionable place for the education of the daughters of the nobility; but discipline was lax, and law and order very perfunctorily administered. One archbishop in 1283 found it necessary to issue a special injunction that the nuns were not to eat and drink "in the houses of lay folk and clerks, in the town of Romsey"; and less than a quarter of a century later Bishop Pontoise found the last state of this religious house worse than the first, for he strictly forbade that any of the nuns resident in the Abbey should "eat, drink, or spend the night in the town." More than two centuries later the Abbey had by no means improved as regards the behaviour of its inmates, and in 1527 Bishop Fox came to inquire into the cases of serious misconduct, and the Vicar-General, after one of the minor offences of which one

of the titled nuns had been guilty, namely the using of "bad language with her sisters," and of spreading abroad of "reproachful and defamatory words of them" had been proved, imposed an amusing punishment, namely that "a red tongue of cloth should be used on the barb under the chin, and remain there for a month."

Twelve years later the Convent was suppressed in common with many others, and the community was dispersed; evidence of whose corruption was indisputable.

All the conventual buildings on the south were pulled down; and there are no traces remaining save, it is said, in the walls of some of the adjacent houses where fragments of the old masonry have been discovered incorporated.

But there are two doors on the south that gave entrance to the nuns and abbess by way of the cloisters, and there is a fine old crucifix, dating from the eleventh century, on the west wall of the south transept, the good preservation of which is said to have been owing to the fact that for many years it was protected by a shed.

In 1544, after the Dissolution, the Abbey church was bought for £100. It has had a chequered career, and was for centuries a bone of contention between the inhabitants of the town, and the ecclesiastical owners. Towards the end of the fourteenth century commissioners were sent down, if possible, to put an end to the dispute, and in the end permission was given the vicar to alter the north transept, and add another aisle to the church. The perpendicular work in the building is largely owing to this reconstruction.

After the Dissolution of the Abbey this new aisle, the Chapel of St. George and the Decorated Dedication Chapels, which had replaced the small Norman Lady Chapel, were all pulled down. This fact explains the presence of the Decorated windows at the east end. They were used to fill the arches, and from old engravings it is clear the work of insertion was very roughly carried out.

The late Rev. E. L. Berthon, who was a remarkable man and the inventor of the " collapsible " boat which bears his name, many of which were once made yearly at Romsey, did much to beautify and restore the Abbey. It was he who cut out the Decorated windows, and lowered them into the positions they now occupy. It is a notable fact that this work, for which Mr. Berthon asked assistance from the Government of the day, was carried out by local workmen under the vicar's directions without the breakage of even a single pane of the glass in the windows, the Government having refused any assistance. It was to this vicar's energies, skill and understanding that the beautiful building has been in so large a measure restored. It was he who discovered amongst the lumber in the triforium fragments of the fourteenth century carved screen, which had once been used to divide the parish church from the Nun's building. The three surviving sections were stripped of the paint, repaired and brought down, and incorporated with the present chancel screen.

After the purchase of the old church by the townsfolk unfortunately most of the old documents relating to it were destroyed, and few of the ancient monuments survive to the

present day. Among the best of these survivals is a beautiful effigy in the south transept, of whom it is not known, but it is said the head dress worn is similar to that on the seal of Ela, Countess of Salisbury, who owned property in the north of Hampshire, and it is inferred from these facts that the effigy is probably that of a member of the Nevill or Walerand families. In the Ambulatory there are a few relics ; among them the famous Romsey Psalter, an illuminated MS. written in the town about 1440. It is a small octavo volume, which at one time found its way to the late well-known book dealer, Quaritch. How or for what reason is not known. The other relic which never fails to interest the visitor is a plait of auburn hair resting on a wooden pillow. It was discovered when a grave was being dug in 1839, near the Abbesses' doorway in the south aisle. A small lead coffin was disclosed lying under the original foundations north and south, which position seemed to indicate a non-Christian burial. It may have been Roman, for on several occasions Roman coins have been found below the Saxon work. When the coffin was opened the contents became dust with the exception of the plait of hair still preserved in a glass case.

Since the sixteenth century Romsey's history has not been very eventful. In the registers one gets glimpses now and again of incidents, including those of the period of the Civil War. One entry records the burial of some men " slain at the routing of the King's forces at Romsey, on December 12th, 1643." Some of the most interesting of the entries are three which tell of the killing of one " frances Nash, daughter of

ffrancis, mortally wounded by a soldier hanged upon the Swan signe post," and yet another "a soldier whose name unknowne hanged for murther when Sr. Th. : Fairfax in towne."

Now the Conservative Club, the Swan Inn still possesses, in the beautiful piece of hammered ironwork outside of it, the "Swan sign post" from which William Morris aforesaid was apparently hung. In the Abbey walls there are still traces in the shape of pock-marks where bullets or cannon balls struck it during the fighting which took place in the streets of Romsey, through which King Charles was destined later on to pass on his way from Hurst Castle to Whitehall. James I turned Romsey into a municipal town, he visited it, and granted it a charter in 1607.

Romsey to-day is just a quiet country town set far off the beaten track of most holiday makers in Hampshire, and living its quiet life unvexed, one would imagine, by much that disturbs our large centres of population, and depending chiefly for its prosperity on the patronage of farmers, and the "big houses" in the neighbourhood, and with its chief industries milling, brewing and the building of the Berthon boats.

Some three miles to the east of Romsey lies the little village of North Baddesley where there is a tombstone of unusual interest. It is that of one Charles Smith, a noted poacher. He was the son of a local "squatter" or settler, who had fenced in certain common land, which after a period of years became his own freehold if he were not previously

ejected. This Charles Smith and an accomplice were detected by an under-keeper, Robert Snelgrove, poaching after dark in Lord Palmerston's coverts at Broadlands. Smith to hold up the pursuit fired at close range, and wounded the keeper dangerously. Some considerable time afterwards the poacher was caught, tried and condemned to death at Winchester Assizes, and was hanged, although Lord Palmerston, whose name appears on Smith's tombstone, did his best to secure a mitigation of the sentence. Smith's affray was only one of the many which took place almost weekly in the county of Hampshire at this period—the early part of the nineteenth century. And poaching in Hampshire generally, and especially in the Romsey district, was very rife in the fifteenth century. It is recorded that poachers dammed the rivulets, and took the fish which belonged to the Abbey, and also poached for hares on the Abbey lands.

In very ancient times in fact, we are told, even before the Norman Conquest the deer and game in the Forest were preserved by Thegns or Verderers, and Marwood gives us a version of the foresters' oath in the old days as follows :

“ You shall true liegemen be
Unto the King's Majestie,
Unto the beastes of the Forest you shall no hurt do,
Nor to anything that doth belong there unto.
The offences of others you shall not conceal,
But to the utmost of your power you shall them reveal ;
All these things you shall see done,
So help you God at his Holy Doom.”

Landowners were allowed, however, to shoot wolves, bears and foxes, and lords both temporal and spiritual were permitted to kill two beasts. Though before killing them they were obliged to sound a horn to show that it was a legal right they exercised, and not a theft they were committing.

From Romsey there is a good road northwards through pretty country to quaintly named Mottisfont, in the Test Valley, where there was once in the twelfth century an Augustin Priory that took the place of a Saxon foundation of which some slight remains are still traceable. Who the founders were has never been settled beyond dispute; but it is known that Henry VIII gave the Priory to Lord Sandys in exchange for the Manor of Chelsea. The present house, which dates from the early part of the eighteenth century, is set amid delightful scenery, and has several features of interest, including the Tudor doorway and the vaulted crypt, nowadays used as a dairy. In the house are also some fine tapestries.

The church, dedicated to St. Andrew, is worth while seeing because of some good stained glass brought here from the ruined Chapel of the Holy Ghost at Basingstoke, an early seventeenth century brass, and a fine Norman chancel arch.

On one's way to Bossington and Horsebridge, along the Valley of the Test, one passes through some typically Hampshire scenery with wide water meadows, and the sparkling river, the haunt of trout, forming many a delightful and truly English picture. Bossington is but a small village, but it is famous for its trout and grayling, and Froude, the

historian, spent many delightful days angling hereabouts. The Roman road from Winchester to Old Sarum (Salisbury) crosses the Test here, and along it from time to time considerable Roman remains have been discovered including early coins and a leaden pig of the first century, now reposing in the British Museum.

Eastward of Bossington our way leads us to Somborne and Ashley. There are several Sombornes of which King's Somborne, some three miles south of Stockbridge, is the most important. It is a delightful village, the chief characteristic of which, other than its general picturesqueness, is perhaps the wonderful variety of architecture which may be found by the curious within its confines. Here one find walls of chalk, of flint and of old brick ; some of them with their tops tiled or thatched ; and the cottages are in as great variety. In some cases they come right on to the edge of the village street, while the next house modestly retires from the road frontage, and is approached through a wicket gate along a garden path, which is in spring and summer bordered and gay with homely flowers, and sweetly scented "as a pot pourri." In spring many of the gardens are beautiful with apple and pear blossom, and noisy with the twittering of birds. Most of the tiled roofs are moss grown and stained with lichen, while the roofs of the thatched cottages are in every gradation of colour from that of patches of new straw to the old grey-brown tint that speaks of years of weathering. There are timber-framed dwellings, and those with mud walls, others of many gables and quaintly leaning chimney stacks, all

forming tempting subjects for the artist, and attractive "bits" for the amateur photographer.

Along one side of the main street there trickles, in summer, an attenuated stream that an old inhabitant assured us, in



OLD COTTAGE, ASHLEY.

winter, "assumes quite a respectable size"; and the numerous plank and other bridges connecting the cottage gardens with the highway seem to bear out this statement. King's Somborne—as its title tells—was once wholly, and still is

in part, royal property, although only a few stones mark the site of the aforetime Palace of John of Gaunt. In the church is an ancient stone coffin supposed to be that of one William Briwere, a twelfth-century notability of Hampshire. Though the church has been several times restored, and not altogether too wisely, it contains some interesting Decorated and Transitional Norman work in the chancel and the nave.

Those who find their way to King's Somborne should certainly go, as we did, the mile or two eastward to Ashley, near which is a Danish entrenchment and some traces of Roman camps. Ashley is a delightful little village, reached by a leafy lane along the edge of which the picturesque ivy clad and thatched cottages have clustered. It is one of the quietest and quaintest little villages in Hampshire, breathing an atmosphere of remoteness from hustle and modern restlessness that is delightful to the real wanderer who loves the by-ways rather than the highways of the country-side. The little church, with its wicket gate and small porch, is chiefly Norman, with a narrow chancel arch, and happily bears less traces of restoration than do most buildings of a like age. There is a curious alms box cut in the solid oak pillar in one of the bench ends dated 1595, and the building is lighted with small Transition-Norman windows, and has a Norman font.

It is well worth while to climb up the lane which twists up the hill-side till it reaches the crest of Ashley Down, and there joins the old Roman road, once a great highway across this part of England. Nowadays this ancient road is little

used, the sheep crop by the wayside, and there is a soundlessness along the ridges of the hills which is very restful and charming.

If one goes as far as the monument on Farley Down one has a magnificent panorama of wild beauty, and those with time to explore will find many rough paths in various directions through the beech woods, and others across the Downs. Very bewildering are these, it must be admitted, to the stranger. From this high vantage spot one cannot see Winchester, although one might almost imagine it would be possible to do so, for it lies hidden in a slight hollow away to the east, but all round there is a perfect patchwork of fields, clumps of woods, slopes and declivities of wonderful colour, running through the greens of varied tint in spring and summer and in autumn ablaze with browns, russets, reds, and even purples. To the south-west are ridges of hills, mostly with trees upon them ; the sentinels of the Forest which lies beyond. Away to the south-east one gets a glimpse of the haze, which always seems to hang over large towns, marking Southampton, and can fancy on a clear day that the heights of the Isle of Wight are dimly seen on the horizon line. Westward one's circle of vision stretches right into Wiltshire, and sometimes, towards sunset, the tall spire of Salisbury Cathedral can be faintly distinguished.

Farley Mount and its monument erected on an ancient barrow is, indeed, a lonely and barren spot, given over to gorse and bramble, and patches of heath here and there. The monument marks the grave of a horse owned by Mr.



KINGS SOMBORNE

Paulet St. John, named "Beware Chalk Pit," which was famous for an exploit of winning the Hunter's Plate on Worthy Down in 1773, although it had jumped into a chalk pit 25 feet deep the previous year! The race was held in connection with the Winchester Races which in the days of Jane Austen's residence in Winchester became noted for the bad weather with which they were almost invariably handicapped. The famous novelist, indeed, wrote the following lines upon this very topic only a few days before she died :

" When Winchester races first took their beginning,
 'Tis said that the people forgot their old Saint,
That they never applied for the leave of St. Swithun,
 And that William of Wykeham's approval was faint."

CHAPTER IV.

A BEAUTIFUL WATERING PLACE—THE DORSET BORDER.

ALTHOUGH Bournemouth, which to-day is one of the few great towns of Hampshire, cannot claim to be ancient, yet it claims a place in a book of this kind by reason of its romantic history and natural beauties.

A little more than a century ago there was no Bournemouth, and only a "Burnmouth" on the map, and the latter meant nothing more than the point where a few cottages stood, and where a tiny stream entered the sea, across which in our young days at its widest point, before it was tamed, "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within a concrete channel, we ourselves and many another Bournemouth boy have successfully jumped. Those were the days, too, of untamed cliffs, and chines down which few people passed to the magnificent sandy beach in a week or even a year, but up which sometimes on dark nights would go bands of men leading horses—the bold smugglers of the Hampshire coast—who made their way inland to the New Forest, and the heaths and villages of Dorset from whence their tubs of spirits, bales of lace, and packages of tea were distributed to customers throughout the countryside.

At the back of the cliffs, and, indeed, crowning them in those days, from almost the entrance to Poole Harbour on the west to Southbourne on the east, were dense pine woods, while from the site of the present pier approach there ran up

for two miles or so inland a little valley through which the Bourne purled its way, at first through bogland, with heath-clad slopes rising on either side of the valley, in which wild birds nested and coney's burrowed, and then, as it approached the sea, through meadows in which cows and sheep grazed. But a little way further inland still and one came upon a series of ponds in which there was a decoy for wild duck perpetuated to-day in the name of "Coy Pond," a sheet of water which lies almost at the head of the present-day valley which once extended northward uninterruptedly past the railway embankment towards the heathlands of Kinson, and westward in the direction of the valley-like depression lying to the north of Upper Parkstone. Such was Bournemouth even as recently as the early years of the nineteenth century. And then, in 1810, there was built on a spur of land above the valley "the first marine residence," the forerunner of hundreds of picturesque villas which now line the cliffs of the incomparable bay, or nestle amid the wealth of foliage which has gained for the place the name of "the Evergreen Valley."

More than three centuries before this Burnemouth or Bournemouth, a name derived from the mouth of the Bourne, is traceable in the "Calendar of Domestic State Papers," where an account is given of a survey made of the coast line by the then Earl of Southampton and others, who had evidently been deputed to investigate it with a view of ascertaining the likely places for the landing of a foreign foe on the Hampshire coast. This investigation, we are told,

extended from Bournemouth in the Westover Hundred to the east haven of Hayling Island, near Chichester. The spot now the site of a town which has grown to such vast dimensions as a summer and winter resort, was estimated by the same Lord Thomas Paulet, Earl of Southampton, as a very easy place for the enemy to land at, and "thereby invade the kingdom of the King's Majesty." But old as the name Bournemouth is in its several forms the word "mouth" had, in fact, in the early part of the last century been dropped from the name, and the inhabitants of Christchurch and Poole—then by comparison large and important towns—and the few smugglers, farmers, fisherfolk and casual visitors who came to the place knew it as Bourne, and not as Bournemouth.

On a delightful coloured map dating from the first half of the seventeenth century, which hangs on the wall close by as we write, there is a streamlet marked as the "Bourne" wrongly shown within the County of Dorset, but the name Bourne or Bournemouth does not appear.

However, two names of distinct interest familiar in their modern form to all visitors do appear on this map, one is Alom Chine Copperas House, and the other Bascombe Copperas House, where in the latter years of the sixteenth century James Blunt, 6th Lord Mountjoy, seems to have started works known as "mynes," for the extraction of alum from the shale, and the manufacture of copperas for tanning, ink making and other kindred purposes.

Unfortunately these industries appear to have been doomed to failure, and they certainly lasted a comparatively short time, owing to litigation and other causes. What became of the "myners," who worked the deposits of alum shale and who made copperas, so far as we know there is no record.

Whether Bournemouth as it then was—a tract of wild moorland and heath, with pine-clad cliffs—had a population in connection with its "mynes" of any considerable size is equally unknown.

Bournemouth's next phase, or perhaps one should rather say the next industry which brought it into anything of note, was the smuggling, which thrived amazingly during the last years of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth century. Indeed, but comparatively few years ago there were quite a number of old people who could tell exciting yarns of the thirties and forties, when smuggling was rife, and every one in the district round about, from the labourers, farmers, parsons and squires, was more or less in league with the "free traders."

From the smuggling village of half a dozen villa residences and a score of cottages, and half as many fishermen's huts, to the time when we first knew Bournemouth in childhood, is almost as far a cry as from that latter period to the present day.

Its growth and rise into note and prosperity, which from the sixties to the eighties may be called rapid, has from the nineties onwards been little less than phenomenal. The wild beauty of Bournemouth has in the process disappeared.

Many people—ourselves included—regret the taming and transforming processes the latter has undergone at least in some particulars. Much of the pinewood area has disappeared in the march of progress, and, all assertions to the contrary, Bournemouth is less “a city amid the pines” to-day than it was twenty years ago. Pines doubtless have been planted in considerable numbers, but the once characteristic feature of the town has largely disappeared. In the place of pinewoods and a wilderness one has a bright, beautiful and modern town.

Strangely enough Bournemouth seems to have owed its origin as a residential place and health resort not a little to the prosperity at the beginning of the last century of a place that has grown scarcely at all while Bournemouth has been rising from obscurity into fame. About the year 1810 there came to Mudeford hard by and to the south-east of Christchurch, then a place of some resort for sea-bathing, a Mr. and Mrs. L. D. G. Tregonwell who were suffering under bereavement, and the latter also from ill health which necessitated a rest and change of scene. From Mudeford one afternoon of a summer’s day they drove across the rough heathland track, and through the environing pine woods to what was then known as Bourne, afterwards to become famous as Bournemouth.

One can imagine these pioneers passing through the then thick pine woods of the East Cliff along the Christchurch to Poole road, which in places was then little more than a country cart tract, till they reached a point from which they

gazed down the descending road that led into the desolate valley with its meadows, through which the little river flowed on its way to the sea surrounded by thickly treed slopes rising on either side. Mr. Tregonwell left on record the impression created in his mind by this wilderness into which he had suddenly come. Delighted with the spot—which was sheltered, picturesque and strangely restful and beautiful—he decided to acquire land and to build himself a residence. This in due course he did, and by this act perhaps in some sense entitled himself to the description of “the founder of Bournemouth.”

Not only did he build a house, but he also did a good deal to bring the place into note, and by the year 1830 a considerable number of villa residences lay scattered among the pines, and a village of some size and note had sprung up in the centre and round about the valley at a point some half a mile from the sea.

The rise of Bournemouth from that time onward to the sixties was slow but sure. Early in the sixties an old directory gives a list of about 50 or 60 families of tradespeople and others habitually resident there ; but with the sixties and seventies there came a spirit of enterprise over the town, which has increased year by year, and its growth of late years has become increasingly rapid

Very soon public gardens, walks and roads were laid out. The fields of the Bourne valley, in the lower sections of which nearest the sea cattle grazed and children gathered buttercups and daisies, and in the upper sections of which were

nothing but marshland and bog, the resort of wild fowl, were gradually reclaimed and laid out. The present-day result are the Gardens which during the course of the years have become one of Bournemouth's greatest beauties and attractions ; and, indeed, are excelled by none in any English seaside resort.

The old order began to change, and with the disappearance of the smaller countryfied shops—a few of which still stand to the west of the Square much as they were sixty or seventy years ago—arose the splendid business premises which now stretch in almost an unbroken line for more than a mile through the centre of the town. In place of the scattered original villa residences dotted in seclusion amid the pine forests and rhododendron woods, have arisen charming modern houses situated in spacious gardens which have served to give Bournemouth one of its chief, most pleasing and, indeed, almost unique characteristics. And with the multiplication of houses has come the no less wonderful growth of the population of this garden city, and the prosperity which of late years has attended it.

From the village of seventy years ago of a few hundred inhabitants, served by a single old woman as “ postwoman,” who combined with the delivery of letters the sale of butter and eggs, Bournemouth has arisen to be a town of nearly 100,000 inhabitants.

Five and thirty years ago Mr. Hardy wrote of Bournemouth in his “ Tess of the D'Urbervilles ” as follows :

“ This fashionable watering place, with its eastern and western stations, its piers, its groves of pines, its promenades, and its covered gardens, was, to Angel Clare, like a fairy place suddenly created by the stroke of a wand . . . an outlying eastern tract of the enormous Egdon Waste was close at hand, yet on the very verge of that tawny piece of antiquity such a glittering novelty as this pleasure city had chosen to spring up. Within a space of a mile from its outskirts every irregularity of the soil was pre-historic, every channel an undisturbed British trackway not a sod having been turned since the day of the Caesars. Yet the exotic had grown here suddenly as the prophets' gourd ; and had drawn hither Tess.

“ By the midnight lamps he went up the winding ways of this new world in an old one, and could discern between the trees and against the stars, the lofty roofs, chimneys, gazebos, and towers of the numerous fanciful residences of which the place was composed. It was a city of detached mansions, a Mediterranean lounging-place on the English Channel, and as seen now by night it seemed even more imposing than it was.

“ The sea was near at hand, but not obtrusive, it murmured, and he thought it was the pines ; the pines murmured in precisely the same manner and he thought it was the sea.”

With the disappearance of the old wooden pier or jetty, which some of the older inhabitants still remember, alongside which in summer came occasional sailing boats and paddle

steamers from Poole and Southampton bringing visitors to Bournemouth, has come the elegant promenade pier from which sail every summer morning a veritable fleet of pleasure craft, bearing thousands of visitors to neighbouring coast resorts, and others even across Channel.

Less than sixty years ago the Winter Gardens Pavilion, now famous as the home of one of the finest Municipal Orchestras in the United Kingdom, was the site of an archery ground where ladies in crinolines, and gentlemen in "peg top" trousers and affecting Dundreary whiskers shot at straw targets.

Where the Arcade now stands, in the centre of the business quarter of the town, stood Early Victorian houses, oaks, sycamores, and a rustic bridge spanning the woodland glen.

Little of original Bournemouth has, indeed, remained untouched by the destructive and transforming fingers of time, but the town has been fortunate in its successive governing bodies, for on the whole it has been wisely developed. The artificial beauties which have in a measure replaced the more natural have been evolved by no violent processes, but have come into being as parts of a well-considered scheme; the result of which is seen in the beautiful modern town. Naturally with the growth of Bournemouth there grew up also in connection with it a number of literary associations, one or two of which certainly served to bring the town into wider notice. Among the most notable of these associations was that connected with Boscombe Manor—now renamed and devoted to the purposes of a Collegiate

School for Girls—long the residence of Sir Percy Florence Shelley, the son of the poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was drowned in the Gulf of Spezzia in 1822. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, the widow of the poet, who died on February 1st, 1851, lies buried in the beautiful churchyard of St. Peter's, the first and most important Bournemouth church, where



also lie the bodies of her father and mother, William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, removed thither from their burial place in St. Pancras Churchyard, London.

Sir Percy Shelley offered a beautiful memorial to his father and mother to St. Peter's Church, but this was refused on the score, it is said, that it would turn the church into a show place, and this was eventually erected in Christchurch Priory.

The body of the poet, it will be remembered, was cremated, and the ashes buried in the English cemetery at Rome, but his heart was saved from the flames by Trelawny, one of his friends, and for many years it was one of the most treasured relics of the poet preserved by Sir Percy and Lady Shelley at Boscombe Manor. On the death of Sir Percy Shelley, the heart of his father was placed in the same coffin in the vault in St. Peter's Churchyard.

For three years Robert Louis Stevenson, one of the most charming and well-beloved writers of the nineteenth century, lived at Bournemouth, largely on account of his health. Sir Sidney Colvin, the editor of Stevenson's letters, tells us that the novelist "found in the heaths and pinewoods here some distant semblance of the landscape of his native Scotland, and in the sandy curves of the Channel coast a passable substitute for the bays and promontories of his beloved Mediterranean." In 1888 Stevenson and his wife moved into a house of their own, the gift of the elder Stevenson, renamed by Robert Louis Stevenson "Skerryvore," in remembrance of one of the great lighthouses built by his father's firm off the Scottish coast. The Stevensons had previously been in lodgings in a house on the West Cliff known as "Wensleydale," and for a few months, December, 1884, to March, 1885, were living at "Bonallie Towers," Branksome Park. It was at Bournemouth, whilst living as he phrased it, "like a weevil in a biscuit," that Stevenson accomplished some of his finest work, notwithstanding the serious handicap of continuous ill health. His famous story,

"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," was written at Bournemouth; also "Kidnapped" and "Underwoods," and we believe that gruesome story, "The Body Snatchers." "Skerryvore," which stands at the seaward end of R. L. Stevenson Avenue, Westbourne, Bournemouth, pleasantly situated overlooking the head of Alum Chine, is very much as it was during Stevenson's occupation, save that the ivy has grown over the greater part of it.

Among other writers who have made Bournemouth a place of residence for long or short periods in the past one may recall James Payn, a famous novelist of the seventies and eighties, who came here to winter when suffering from haemorrhage; John Keble, the author of "The Christian Year," for many years the vicar of Hursley, Hampshire, spent the last days of his life at Bournemouth in a house known as "Brookside," overlooking the Lower Pleasure Gardens, and the pier approach. St. Peter's Church contains two memorials to him, the Keble Chapel and the "Minstrel" window, and there is a tablet on the house where he lived.

George Macdonald, who enjoyed considerable fame as a novelist and poet in the latter part of the nineteenth century, also lived at Bournemouth for many years; and among other writers who have found the charms of Bournemouth irresistible one may mention Adeline Sergeant; Guy Boothby, the creator of the famous "Dr. Nikola"; Mrs. Desmond Humphreys, better known as "Rita"; and more recently Miss G. V. McFadden, who has written several novels with the district round about Bournemouth as a background.

Bournemouth has figured also in the works of R. D. Blackmore, Conan Doyle, F. Anstey, Orme Angus, John Oxenham and others. And many writers whose works have world wide circulations have found in Bournemouth a delightful resting place amid beautiful surroundings.

The oldest house in Bournemouth, a picturesque thatched cottage known as "Portman Lodge," which was an extension of a four-roomed cottage erected in 1810, and formerly known as "Symes Cottage," was unfortunately burned down some few years ago, its shell was, however, incorporated in the rebuilding, but the picturesque thatched roof has been replaced by tiles.

Searchers after the picturesque and those who would know Bournemouth as it was a century or so ago can gain some idea of its wild state by taking a walk across the Kinson Plateau to the north of the Upper Pleasure Gardens beyond the railway embankment, or by wandering in the, alas, fast disappearing Talbot Woods, or taking a stroll across the Queen's Park Golf Links. In these three portions of modern Bournemouth and its outskirts one will still find the wild moorland of the early years, and middle half of the nineteenth century, and the remnants of the pine forest to the presence of which Bournemouth owed much of its early vogue. It is difficult, indeed, to-day to associate the doings of the smugglers at dead of night, such as are described in the old-time novel, "Branksome Dene," with the fashionable and well-tamed sea front, and Undercliff Drive which stretches a couple of miles or so along the foot of the cliff.

But, notwithstanding its growth, development, and transformation, Bournemouth remains a very unique seaside resort of much charm, and with not a little of its natural beauty remaining.

Ringwood, a quaint little town prettily situated on the River Avon between thirteen and fourteen miles from Bournemouth in a north-easterly direction, provides a great contrast to the latter town. It lies on the outskirts of the greater New Forest of the past, with heath-clad heights northward and eastward. The road through Herne across Avon Common and thence, skirting Foxbury Hill, into Ashley, and eastward, crossing the Avon three times, into Ringwood takes one through some pretty moorland and valley scenery typical of this part of the County. Bournemouth is very modern, and its little neighbour, Ringwood, very ancient. This picturesque town, with its irregularly placed houses, some of them, even in the main street leading to the centre of the town, thatched, was a place of importance prior to the Norman conquest. In 1066 it was one of the manors of Tostig, a brother of Harold, killed at the Battle of Hastings, and the place contributed supplies for him when he was seeking to invade England, and by so doing drew Harold away from the south which was thus left open to the attacks of William of Normandy.

In the fourteenth century Edward II granted the right of holding a fair at Ringwood to the then Earl of Salisbury. During the Civil War in 1643-51 Ringwood appears to have taken an active part on the side of the Parliament, a Mr.

Elliott raising a troop of horse for that purpose. In April of 1644 the Parliamentarian forces under Sir William Waller captured Christchurch from the Royalists, and Ringwood appears to have taken part in the rejoicings over that event, and Cromwell himself visited the town on his march from Corfe Castle, Dorset, on his way to attack the town of Winchester and Basing House which still held out for the King.

Twenty years later, after the Restoration, George Fox, the famous founder of the Society of Friends, visited the town on a preaching tour, and it seems unbelievable in these days that more than one attempt was made to break up his meetings with soldiery, on the grounds that they were illegal assemblies. Still another twenty years or so, and the sleepy old town, which to-day strikes the visitor as so far behind the age, so tranquil and so remote from modern hustle, was involved in the turmoil which followed the ill-starred Monmouth Rebellion in 1685. "King Monmouth" had many sympathizers in the immediate neighbourhood, and after the disastrous Battle of Sedgemoor, when his hopes were once and for all shattered, the Duke fled eastward, and it was thought was making for the port of Lymington when he was captured in a ditch on Shag Heath between Wimborne and Ringwood, and brought to the latter town. His supporters, Lord Grey, the Count of Brandenburg and others, were afterwards captured at Holt House. The troops who had found the Duke bivouacked in the market place not far from the stately church of St. Peter and Paul which was founded in the thirteenth century, and next morning

the remainder of them, with their now dejected and forlorn-looking prisoner, entered the town.

Near the ancient ford, which is overshadowed by trees, at the western end of the town stands a square built house known as " Monmouth House," in which it is stated the Duke was temporarily lodged, and there would appear to be considerable grounds for accepting this tradition, although the building looks more modern than others in its immediate vicinity. From this house then, according to Macaulay, Monmouth must have penned the abject letters craving pardon which have done so much to lower the writer in the estimation of even those who regard him and his undertaking as one of the most picturesque, if pitiful, figures and incidents in the history of the time.

Ringwood has been famous for centuries for the manufacture of woollen gloves, and in the year 1830, which was distinguished for rioting amongst the labourers of the districts round about, the town, threatened with the destruction of its mills, took the matter of defence into its own hands, and by attacking the rioters as they advanced, prevented damage not only to Ringwood itself but other places in the immediate neighbourhood. The church standing a little way back on one side of the square was almost entirely rebuilt in the middle of the last century. It contains only a few traces of the former building—a window or two—and a mutilated brass of a vestmented priest in the chancel dating from the fifteenth century.

One should certainly go two miles northward of Ringwood to Ellingham Church, which is supposed to have been a portion of a monastery and possesses a very interesting interior. The village stands right on the Dorset border near the Avon, and is very picturesque. The Priory founded here in 1163 was attached to the Abbey of St. Sauveur le Vicomte in Normandy until Henry VI gave it to Eton. Among the most interesting things we noted in the interior are some prior's tombs, a double piscina in the chancel, and a square canopied pew which belongs to Moyles Court. Above the fine oak rood screen is a blocked rood loft, where the rood itself is said to exist. On the west wall is a picture by the Flemish artist, Golzius, of the Last Judgment in a handsomely carved oak frame, which was taken from a church in Port St. Mary near Cadiz when the latter town was taken by the English in 1702. Admiral Lord Windsor gave it to Ellingham Church to serve as an altar piece. Dame Alice Lisle, perhaps the most noted victim of the Bloody Assize, which followed the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, is buried in the churchyard close to the south wall of the church. In the nave is a monument to her mother, Alice Beconshaw.

Travellers for whom historical houses have abiding interest will not fail to go on to Moyles Court, where Dame Alice Lisle lived, which lies a mile away just on the edge of the Forest moors, set amid a pleasant elm-shaded park, and led up to by a delightful avenue of limes which in summer-time scent the air. It is a fine Elizabethan manor-house, in an excellent state of preservation, thanks to the skilful restoration

undertaken about forty years ago. The house stands to the right of the Ellingham road close under the hills, and one reaches it almost directly by a long narrow and roughly paved lane, which is the turning to the right just before the little footbridge crossing Dockens Water which flows across the road.

It was to this house, after the Battle of Sedgemoor, that two fugitives, hunted by "Colonel Kirke and his lambs," came craving shelter. They were by name John Hicks, a well-known Nonconformist minister, and Richard Nelthorp, a Taunton lawyer. They were sheltered and hidden; but some one had seen them come to the house, and the fact that they were in hiding was betrayed to the King's troops in the neighbourhood, and they were ultimately discovered hiding in a priest's hole and malthouse. Lady Lisle, the widow of one of the regicides, the owner of the house—who had nevertheless aided many a fugitive Royalist during the Civil War—was arrested and charged with treason in that she had assisted and concealed traitors. The aged lady was taken to Winchester, tried in the Hall, and condemned to be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution, and there to be burned alive. The sentence was not carried out immediately on account of the strenuous opposition of the Bishop of Winchester and his clergy, and the aged victim of Judge Jeffreys was for a time reprieved. Ultimately on September 2nd, 1685, she was beheaded in Winchester market-place.

There are many fine views in Hampshire, notably that from Bredon Hill, but those who have come to Ringwood

may well go on northward along the road which follows the banks of the Avon to Gorley Hill, which lies almost equidistant from Fordingbridge and Ellingham where there is, indeed, a beautiful prospect. Northward the valley runs towards the Wiltshire Downs, and on clear days the lofty and slender spire of Salisbury Cathedral can be seen across the Wiltshire border line in the distance ; southward there is a beautiful view down the valley to Christchurch and bold



BREAMORE MILL.

Hengistbury Head ; and westward a delightful prospect of meadows and gently flowing streams. Eastward one looks upon the borders of the far extending Forest, ridge beyond ridge, with exquisite and varied shades of green, and here and there tracts of moorland consisting of purple heather and golden gorse.

In this valley of the Avon was founded a very early Saxon colony in one of the most picturesque portions of

the kingdom of Wessex. The wanderer in this part of the country may well go on northward awhile to see the old Saxon founded church at Breamore, which lies along the Ringwood-Salisbury road, in a pretty village with pleasant cottages, gardens bright with flowers, and a village green. The old church is in the main a Saxon building with a quaint tower, in which remains one of the four original Saxon arches supporting it, and several Saxon windows, and a badly defaced stone rood, with old sculpture generally attributed to Saxon times. Once there was a Priory here, formed by Baldwin de Redvers, and in the Priory meadow is a stone coffin. On the Downs about a mile to the north-west of Breamore House, which in part is Elizabethan, is a maze cut in the turf which is thought to have been made by the monks.

Breamore lies in a lonely stretch of country, but a very delightful one with Fordingbridge right on the Wiltshire border, one of the remotest of Hampshire townlets worthy of a visit. On one side of the little market square stands its picturesque church rising above the trees. It is interesting to the student of architecture because of the examples of various periods which has been incorporated in the fabric. The chancel is Early English, and there are some charming slender Decorated pillars, and a chapel of the same period with a Perpendicular roof with good carving in the old beams.

To-day Fordingbridge, anciently of importance, is but a sleepy little town frequented chiefly by anglers fishing in the Avon waters. But all around this district are delightful villages, South Gorley, South Dammerham, Rockbourne,

and Martin for example. The last named place, with fine thatched cottages, stowed away in the remotest and most western corner of the County.

To reach Christchurch one must return down the Avon Valley, much the way one has come as far as Ringwood, when one takes the eastern bank of the Avon by the Ringwood-Sopley-Christchurch road through picturesque little hamlets and meadowland scenery so typical of this delightful valley.

Christchurch has of recent years been somewhat extended and modernised. Its great neighbour, Bournemouth, has almost joined hands with it, throwing out feelers as far as Southbourne and Iford, and threatening, indeed, ultimately to absorb the ancient town, which was till quite recent years a Parliamentary Borough that included Bournemouth.

Christchurch still, however, notwithstanding growth and modern "improvements," has an old-world air, and its one long, straggling street has the picturesqueness of irregularity. Hengist's second invasion of England is by tradition supposed to have taken place near Christchurch, and the event is perpetuated in the name of the great sandy headland which rises above the south-western shores of Christchurch Harbour, and forms the eastern extremity of Bournemouth Bay.

Christchurch was anciently known as Twynham, and its history begins in the first year of the tenth century, when the Saxon Chronicle tells us that "Tweoneathan was captured by Ethelwold during his struggle against Edward the Elder." As far back as the Domesday Book reference is made to Thuinham as a borough and royal manor, and somewhere

about this period the Augustinian Priory of Christchurch began to give its name to the place. Richard de Redvers, Earl of Devon, fortified it early in the twelfth century, and built a castle here, an ivy-clad fragment of which stands south of the main road close to the river half-way through the town. Edward VI, we are told, came to Christchurch in search of health, and a century or so later it was held for King Charles against Cromwell's forces by Lord Goring.

The Priory Church is the great glory of the town, it is beautifully situated on a tongue of land washed on two sides by rivers, and is one of the largest and most interesting in the South of England. The church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was originally the chapel of the Priory, William Rufus handed it over to Flambard, who rebuilt it about 1095, and to whom is due the credit for the chief beauties of the building. There is a legend connected with the erection of the original church. It tells us how the builder selected a spot on the top of St. Catherine's Hill where the British town and the Roman camp had formerly stood. One reason for this selection of site was no doubt that the church would be less exposed to the attacks of the Danish pirates, who put into the sheltered harbour under the shadow of Hengistbury Head, although it would be somewhat remote from the dwellers in the valleys and the district round about.

Here on the hill the builders commenced their work and continued it until the discovery was made that the stones laid during the day were mysteriously carried every night down into the valley where the people dwelt whose needs the

church could fill. After persevering for some time in the attempt to build on St. Catherine's Hill the builders accepted what was regarded as the intervention of Heaven, and commenced to build where the church now stands. One day during the building a strange workman of great skill applied for employment and was engaged by the monkish builders. He worked without wage, and in silence, never speaking to his fellow workers. One day the principal beam to be placed in the north aisle was found to have been cut too short, and great consternation prevailed. Next day the beam was found to have been miraculously lengthened so that it could occupy the position intended; but the unknown workman had disappeared, and was never seen again. The monkish builders forthwith decided that the mysterious builder must have been Christ himself, and this was the origin, say some authorities, of the dedication of the church to Christ. Naturally in the dark ages the Holy Beam and a church connected with miracles was recognized as a possible source of great revenue, and doubtless much wealth flowed into the coffers of the Priory during the succeeding centuries.

Flambard, who was the Red King's grasping and unscrupulous justiciar—although also a great architect who gave us not only beautiful Christchurch but Durham Cathedral—realized to the full how profitable the miracle working Priory might prove, and so he bargained with the canons that they should give him all the moneys received from pilgrims and devout people in return for their board and lodging! Christchurch, when Flambard set about its rebuild-



MUDEFORD. MOUTH OF CHRISTCHURCH HARBOUR

ing, was already an important place ecclesiastically, with a church, nine chapels, and residential buildings of which, however, some had been allowed to fall into decay. The old Saxon monastery was demolished, and after Flambard, who had lost his position through the death of his master, William Rufus, had been reinstated in the See of Durham, Richard de Redvers to whom Henry I had given the manor of Christchurch joined with the Bishop in endowing and completing Christchurch Priory. _

Of this work the Norman bays, and triforium in the nave, with the remains of a central tower, between the transepts and the crypts, still remain. The monastic church was destroyed in the thirteenth century, it is said, by the fall of the tower. Christchurch is, in fact, the remains of three churches, and, if the effect is somewhat heterogeneous and without definite aim, the beautiful old building, with its particularly charming Norman turret on the outside of the north transept, is a great object lesson to students of architecture. This Norman turret, with its beautiful diaper tracery and interlaced arcading, never fails to arouse the admiration of even those who cannot fully appreciate its technical beauty. The great north porch is one of the finest in England, and the Early English clerestory and the Decorated windows in the south aisle, and the Perpendicular windows of the Lady Chapel are particularly worth noting. There is also a fine stone rood screen.

In ancient times the church was renowned for its charities, and possessed a number of relics connected with various

saints ; and wealthy benefactors endowed the Priory, when they founded memorial chantries, with annual doles of upwards of 450 gallons of beer, nearly 1400 loaves, and a thousand dishes of other eatables. On the Dissolution of Monasteries Henry VIII made the Priory the parish church, but the cloisters and other domestic buildings were destroyed, and all the land except the graveyard was taken away. The chief things to be noted in the interior are the couple of recessed altar tombs in the Lady Chapel, the seven bayed nave, which is a perfect specimen, a Roman arcade and triforium ornamented with interesting hatchet work, the fine sixteenth century rood-screen through which the choir is reached, and the canopied stalls with their grotesquely carved misericords. The reredos represents the Stem of Jesse with its various branches running into niches, each of which holds a statue. The centre figures are those of the Virgin and Child, and are very curious. One should not overlook the fine Flaxman monument on the south side of the altar to the Viscountess Fitz Harris, who is depicted teaching her children ; and on the north side of the altar is the Late Perpendicular Mortuary Chapel of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, who was beheaded in 1541. On the ceiling of this are some distinct traces of Decoration. Near it in the north choir at the eastern end is the altar tomb, with effigies of Sir John Chidioke, slain during the Wars of the Roses in 1449, and his lady, once set with jewels which possibly disappeared at the time of the Dissolution. The coloured alabaster effigies have been much defaced by the

chippings, to which they have been subjected in ancient times, by reason of a belief that they would prove a sovereign remedy for rheumatism and other complaints.

The Shelley memorial, representing the finding of the body of the poet, is just within the porch. It was erected



CHRISTCHURCH.

in 1854, and the work is one of the best known of the sculptor, Weeks. It was placed here because, although Shelley was never at Christchurch, his son, Sir Florence Percy Shelley, lived for many years at Boscombe Manor, between Christchurch and Bournemouth. On the base of the monument

are the beautiful and extraordinarily appropriate lines from his own poem "Adonais" :

" He has out-soared the shadow of our Night ;
Envy and calumny, and hate, and pain
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again ;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain,
Nor when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn."

It seems a pity that the sculptor should have introduced the figure of Mrs. Shelley into the work, who was not present at the finding of the body, and did not confine himself to a subject having a more definite relation to Shelley's death, and the cremation of the body, which was not found for three weeks after the boating accident.

From the roof of the tower of the church there is a wonderful view of the Valley of the Avon and the Stour, of the harbour, Mundeford, the distant Isle of Wight, and eastward of the commencement of the New Forest, which no one should miss.

It is rather the custom to say that Hampshire is not rich in churches, but this cannot surely be true when one remembers Winchester Cathedral, St. Cross and Christchurch Priory, to say nothing of the numerous fine village churches scattered about the country-side, and the innumerable little churches with their red brick towers and beautiful red-tiled

roofs, lichen-stained and enriched by age and weathering, and often with fragments of architecture embodied in them dating back to the time when the world was young and religion in England in its infancy.



SOPLEY CHURCH.

To go down to Mudeford, at the entrance of the harbour which is the headquarters of the salmon fishing, by boat or launch on a fine summer's afternoon is a delightful experience.

Mudeford was in the early days of last century resorted to by a number of literary and other celebrities, Sir Walter Scott among the number, who visited William Stewart Rose,

who built himself a cottage there. Scott was at the time engaged in writing "Marmion," and there is a local reference in that poem, and Malwood appears in a ghost story concerning poaching which Scott wrote for a Scottish publication.

At Burton near the village of Sopley, on a delightful part of the Avon, Southey the poet occupied a cottage for several years, and wrote his "English Epilogues," and Lamb visited him there. Near Sopley is Tyrrell's Ford, where the slayer of "The Red King" crossed the river in his flight through the Forest, and the smithy where the fugitive Sir Walter had his horse's shoes taken off and put on again reversed so as to throw his pursuers off the scent.

CHAPTER V.

SOME NORTH HANTS BEAUTY SPOTS AND THEIR ROMANCE -ANCIENT
ANDOVER, LAVERSTOKE AND ITS HISTORIC MILL.

STOCKBRIDGE is a small and picturesque town in the Test Valley, some eight and a half miles north-west of Winchester along the main Winchester to Salisbury road, and some of the prettiest scenery in the county is to be found in this corner of it. The town is a great haunt of anglers, for there are few better trout to be had in Hampshire than those of the Upper Test, and the silver eels of the river are also noted, and form a delicate dish very popular in the little towns hereabouts, and large quantities of the eels are exported to London.

All along the valley onwards from Stockbridge the wayfarer will be passing through a region of pleasant and rich farms, and wide spreading meadows, in which he will see many Alderneys cropping the pasturage, and where in the river and in its wider reaches there are multitudes of water fowl, including coots, wild duck, and even the rare tufted duck, and occasional swans.

If one comes to Stockbridge in summer, and on a fine day, the picture one gets of the sleepy little town is, indeed, delightful. There are the fields round about it, and the chalk cliffs on the eastern side of the valley shining white above the brilliant green of the water meadows with the Test running through them, a steel-blue ribbon with its surface ruffled by

eddies in the deeper pools, and glistening where the waters are broken by shallows over its gravel bed ; and, with great argosies of cloud in the sky, patches of shadow sweeping across the landscape and subduing for the moment the brilliance of the colours.

Stockbridge is one of those little towns which, though on a line of railway, seem to have slipped backward, rather than gone forward, in the race of modern progress. At any rate, it is to-day rather somnolent than bustling, with a wide, irregular main street running across the narrow valley, and with a low bridge spanning the waters of the blue and green Test. The ancient bridge is one of the most picturesque features of the little town, and it dates from six or seven centuries back, for one finds in a record preserved in the Hartley Institute Library at Southampton that the bridge once bore a brass plate asking that passers-by would pray for the souls of the builders, which with quaint phraseology and spelling ran as follows :—

“ Say of your cheryte a pater noster and a Ave for the Sowllys of John Gylwyn otherwyse seyde Lokke and Richard Gater and Margrete the wyf of the forsayd John and Richard, founderys and makerys of y ys sayd Bryge yn whos sowllys God have mercy.”

The Thames Valley has no monopoly of floods, for Stockbridge people will recall that their river in the year 1774, not content with its wide channels was in flood, “ putting most of the town under water, so that the inhabitants could only get about the streets, and to the farms in the valley, in boats.”

Stockbridge owes a great deal of its picturesqueness to the fact that it is a town of odds and ends of architecture. Quite a number of the houses date from Tudor times, and one has them of all sizes, and of brick and plaster, timber-framed or without, and scarcely two alike. The town in the old



NETHER WALLOP.

days was one of those places where electioneering tactics were so corrupt as to gain the place the name of a "rotten borough," and there were in those days many miserable hovels which were erected to serve as qualifying dwellings for the so-called free and independent electors, who were willing to sell their votes, irrespective of party, to the highest bidder.

One gets a glimpse in Joseph Grego's "History of Parliamentary Elections" of the riotous scenes which took place in these out-of-the-way boroughs, and Stockbridge was admittedly one of the "rottenest" in the County of Hants. Sir Richard Steele, the essayist of "Spectator" fame, was at one time a Member, and there is a story of him sticking an apple full of guineas, and promising it to the couple who should first have an addition to their family nine months after he was elected. The great essayist was, however, not re-elected at the following contest, and it was said that this was because he had failed to give "the golden apple" to the the couple who had claimed it.

To become a Member of Parliament for Stockbridge was, before the Reform Act of 1832, a very costly matter, and it is recorded that on one occasion Lord Imham and a Captain Luttrell spent no less than £10,000 on one election. The poet Gay has something to tell of these days in the verses "To a Lady; epistle I." He wrote:

"Sutton we pass, and leave her spacious down,
And with the setting sun reach Stockbridge town.
O'er our parch'd tongues the rich metheglin glides
And the red dainty trout our knife divides.
Sad melancholy ev'ry visage wears;
What, no election come in seven long years!
Of all our race of Mayors, shall Snow alone
Be by Sir Richard's dedication known?
Our streets no more with tides of ale shall float,
Nor cobblers feast three years upon one vote."



STOCKBRIDGE

Eastward, a little way off the main Stockbridge to Salisbury road, there lies a group of delightful villages known as the Wallops, consisting of Nether Wallop, Middle Wallop, and Over Wallop. They are so charming that it is well worth any wanderer's while to make the necessary diversion to visit them. One goes out of the town across the bridge up over Houghton Down on the western side of the Valley, and, keeping to the south of Chattis Hill and Danebury Down on which the Stockbridge races used to take place and where there were important training stables, descends to Wallop Mill and reaches Nether Wallop through very lonely country.

The valley is known as Wallop Fields, and through it the Wallop Brook, a sparkling little stream, wends its way south-east past the villages and Broughton eventually to join the waters of the Test near Bossington. The Wallop Valley is delightful, and rises on the southern side to the Wiltshire Hills round about Buckholt. The country round about here is interesting as well as charming, as there are many Saxon and Roman remains.

At Broughton, two or three miles south of the main road from Winchester to Salisbury, Robert Owen, the Socialist, founded Harmony Hall, which ultimately much belied its name, and ended in discord and disruption. Nether Wallop is, we think, the most charming village of the group, and the picturesque cottages border a leafy lane which in summer-time is much frequented by artists. The church of St. Andrew was originally a cruciform Norman building, which in the fifteenth century was restored and altered in the Perpendicular

style. In the floor of the nave is a fifteenth century effigy of Maria Gose (d. 1436) the Abbess, and a Latin brass ; and in the eastern wall of the aisle are to be seen a couple of decorated canopied niches, and there is also an ancient slab in the



THE "ANGEL" INN, ANDOVER.

northern aisle—possibly the memorial to a mitred abbott—the brass of which has been removed. From Middle Wallop the high road from Salisbury to Andover is reached which takes one through pleasant country rather typical in its main

characteristics, and yet giving surprises of beauty as, indeed, do so many high roads and by-roads of Hampshire.

Andover appears at first sight to be quite a modern town, and without any knowledge of its history one might be disposed to think it of a mushroom growth—that is to say, mushroom for this portion of Hampshire—dating no farther back than at all events the Mid-Georgian period. There are, indeed, only a few old houses to be found in the town, and two of them are the famous inns, the “George,” and the “Angel,” which indeed, are so old that they recall not merely the age of stage-coaches but, indeed, that of pack-horses, and pilgrims. So Andover in reality is not merely old : it is ancient. How ancient it is not possible with any degree of accuracy to say ; but the Romans came here and built their villas on the slopes of the valley, and the fact that there was an extensive Roman settlement has been proved by the number of remains which have been found. In the British Museum are pavements from villas at Abbots Ann, discovered two or three miles to the south-west of the town, and also from Thruxton, which lies some four miles almost due west.

It is easy, with the history of other Roman settlements to act as “pointers,” to imagine how in this remote portion of Hants there grew up a well-defined Latin civilization, and the land came into cultivation by the natives who lived in a state of serfdom. Andover’s real history, however, does not commence with any certitude until after the coming of the Saxons. The town was a favoured place of residence with King Edgar, who was a favourite of the monks, notwith-

standing the somewhat scandalous intrigues, of which, according to ballad mongers of succeeding generations, he was guilty. He seems, according to William of Malmesbury, to have been a somewhat reckless lover, for it is recorded that when he was on a visit to the town he heard the praises sung of a local beauty, the daughter of the lady who was entertaining him at the time. He ordered that the young girl should be brought to him ; but her mother somehow contrived that a slave should take her daughter's place, and the King did not discover the deception until the following morning. He then gave the slave girl her freedom, and kept her in his retinue until he married Elfthrida, the daughter of Ordgar.

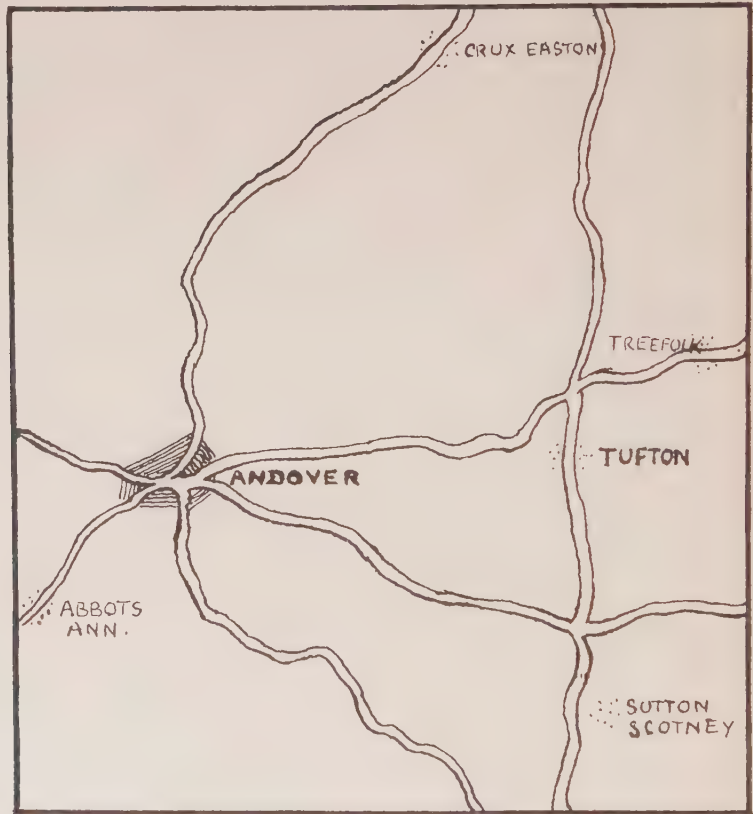
Of the old town of Andover scarcely more than a tradition remains to-day, but when one has climbed the hilly street from the broad market place almost to the church one of the oldest portions of Andover still remaining is reached. Neither the Angel Inn nor the next house to it has externally signs of great age, but when one has entered the yard, through the archway, one finds a building of undoubted antiquity. The house, which, is nowadays a leather seller's shop, contains a fine old carved stone mantelpiece, and many evidences of age in the thickness of the walls of the cellars beneath, and the narrowness and unevenness of its passages. This Angel Inn was in the Middle Ages an important hostelry, and King John is said to have slept here. In later times it was an important house on the Basingstoke-Andover-Salisbury road ; the frontage of the house of to-day is unfortunately modern.

Not less picturesque is the George Inn, which is another of the few ancient buildings in the town.

Up the hill, just above the "Angel," stood the old Norman church, in which, the story goes, during a terrible thunderstorm on Christmas Eve, 1127, the priest was struck dead while celebrating the Midnight Mass, and the terrified worshippers suddenly saw a pig careering wildly about. The building was pulled down some eighty years ago, and the present church erected in its stead on the site. There are a few fragments of the old building left, however, including a very rich late Norman doorway, now forming one of the entrances to the churchyard, and some monuments of the Venables family in the aisles, and there are some slight remains of the Priory which was built by William the Conqueror. It seems a pity that the fine old church should have been pulled down, as the excuse given for this act—namely, that it was in an unsafe and tottering condition—does not seem to have been borne out by the facts which were disclosed.

Andover in the past was visited by many monarchs including John and Henry VII, the latter of whom came there after crushing the rebellion of Perkin Warbeck. James I also visited the town; and Charles I came to it before the second Battle of Newbury. His son, the Prince of Wales, slept at the White Hart; and James II, on his retreat from Salisbury in 1688, came to the Priory House where he supped with his companions, Prince George and the Duke of Ormond. Macaulay tells us that the King on the night of this famous supper "was overwhelmed with his misfortunes," and was

probably suspicious of his companions who were as a matter of fact, only waiting the opportunity to get in touch with William of Orange and throw in their fortunes with him.



ANDOVER DISTRICT.

George III also came in the town and spent the night there when on his way to pay a visit to Weymouth, which by his patronage he had rendered a fashionable watering-place.

In those days Parliamentary elections led to gay and reckless doings, and one of the most amusing stories is that of the lawyer of Sir Francis Delavel, who broke his leg whilst playing a foolish practical joke, and charged Sir Francis £500 damages for it. The broken leg was caused by his being thrown through the window of an inn to which he had invited the mayor and corporation to a feast in the name of the colonel and his officers ; and the regiment in the name of the mayor and corporation ! - On finding how they had been hoaxed, the officers took this summary vengeance upon the practical joker.

One tragic and historic event in the history of Andover was the martyrdom of one John Body, a Somerset man, condemned for heresy and treason at Winchester and brought to Andover—no one seems to know why—where he was hanged, drawn and quartered in November, 1583.

In his dying declaration he said : “ I suffer death this day because I deny the Queen [Elizabeth] to be the supreme head of the Church of God in England. I never committed any other treason, unless they will have hearing Mass or saying the “ Hail, Mary,” to be treason.”

The market, which dates from a time before the memory of man, has been held for centuries, and has done something to keep the town alive, and formerly there was a considerable trade, as the factories turned out silks, serges, broadcloths, and shaloons. At the end of the eighteenth century a company was formed to make a canal up the Test Valley from Southampton Water, but the scheme fell through,

and the canal track eventually served to provide a route for the railway from Romsey.

The road from Andover to Hurstbourne Priors is a pleasant one, and mid-way between Andover and the latter village one passes on the left hand Harewood Peak, and a corner of what was once a vast forest extending for miles, and only rivalled in Hampshire by the great stretches of the New Forest itself in the south.

There are many delightful paths through Harewood which the wanderer on foot in search of remote and unspoiled beauty spots may well spend time in exploring, and the old Roman road from Winchester may yet be traced in it. And, if one has time to make a divergence, it is worth while to climb through an angle of the wood, in which there are still some fine old oaks, up a narrow path to Deadman's Plack, a lofty stone cross, erected nearly a century ago by a Colonel Iremonger, which stands on a hillock, and is a favourite place for picnics. The spot, except in summer-time, is a lonely one, and the woods round about it are beautiful with flowers and rich tints in the various seasons.

The monument commemorates a murder committed long ago by King Edgar, and the story briefly, runs as follows: The King, who was somewhat of a gallant, heard of the great beauty of a lady named Elfrida, who dwelt with her father, an Earl, in far-away Devon. Anxious to see her, Edgar sent Athelwold, his Hampshire Ealdorman, to see the lady, and to report on her beauty. Athelwold, on seeing Elfrida, himself fell in love with her and, saying nothing to her

father of the King's desire to see his daughter, married her himself, and sent word to the King that he had found her a rather over-rated beauty. Athelwold and his wife came back to Hampshire, and very soon rumours of her great beauty reached the King, and the latter sent to Athelwold to tell him that he very much desired to see the lady. Elfrida, herself, scenting in the King's desire to see her a possible new conquest, instead of making herself as plain as possible (as directed by her liege lord) used every art she knew to enhance her beauty. The King fell in love with her, and she very willingly returned his passion, and left her husband to repent of his folly in deceiving the King, and making of the latter an enemy. Although Edgar had satisfied his desire, he determined to take vengeance on his deceitful subject, and sent for the Earl to meet him in a wood at Warewelle, called Harewood, so that they might hunt together. During the hunt the King transfixed Athelwold with a javelin. Such, at any rate, is the story.

There seems little doubt that Elfrida actually connived at the death of her husband, and afterwards added to her crimes by murdering King Edgar's son, her stepson, Edward the Martyr, on March 18th, 979, at Corfe Castle, Dorset, a few miles over the Hampshire border.

The monument is supposed to mark the spot where Athelwold was done to death.

As one goes onward there is delightful country lying both north and south of the road, for northward lies at no great distance Crux Easton, and Woodcott, two pretty

villages in hilly country, in which, being a pedestrian, or motorist, rather than a cyclist, distinctly counts. At Crux Easton once lived Edward Lisle, a nephew of the regicide, whose nine daughters were celebrated in a verse written by Alexander Pope, who was their father's friend. Woodcott is chiefly famous for an enormous yew tree, and if one wishes to stand upon the highest point in north Hampshire, one has to go only three and a half miles north-westward of Crux Easton, and climb Pilot Hill from whose summit, 874 feet above sea level, right on the border line of the boundary line of Berks and Hants, one has a magnificent prospect.

On a hill to the east, standing above Sidley Wood, is the picturesque village of Ashmansworth, reached by narrow lanes, which in spring are ablaze with primroses and blue-bells, and canopied over with a delicate green tracery against the blue sky. The little church is quite close to the Church Farm, and might, indeed, be almost overlooked as a mere barn were it not for its belfry and the tiny graveyard. The building is chiefly early English, with some traces of Norman work which dates back to the twelfth century. Probably, it stands on the site of a far earlier building, for it is known that Athelstan gave the manor to the Winchester See somewhere about the middle of the tenth century. Ashmansworth Church certainly conveys to the visitor the impression of great antiquity, and there are said to be traces of Roman work in its foundations. Outside the porch is the date 1694, when evidently restorations were made. Students of architecture will be interested in the outside walls, because

in them there appear traces of many periods which have served to make the church unusually interesting to antiquaries. As one enters, one realizes its antiquity, notwithstanding some rather incongruous-looking modern innovations. The darkened and rough beams in the roof, tell their tale of some seven centuries passed. Over the one Norman arch to the chancel are traces of some old frescoes, one of which, representing the Pentecost, is of special interest as it is claimed to be the only instance of the subject in an English wall painting.

Westward, five miles or so away, lies Ibthorpe where the Lloyds lived, and were visited by Jane Austen. It is a delightful little village full of picturesque old half-timbered houses, many thatched, and with overhanging upper stories, and with the bricks and tiles of which they are built, mellowed by the passing of the years, to wonderful tones of red and brown. Many of the cottages stand back from the road, each in its own quaint, old-fashioned garden, which is full all the year round of seasonal plants, flowers, and herbs. Many gardens have dark, clipped yews, giving a sombre note and serving to show up all the more brilliantly the gay colours of asters, sweet peas, hollyhocks, sunflowers, nasturtiums (climbing and dwarf), and dahlias; while in autumn the cottages are aflame with the crimson glories of virginia creeper.

Each village of this particular part of Hampshire seems to rival the other in quaintness, beauty and surprise; while in summer one's road passes along valleys with fields rich unto harvest or given over to pasturage which slope up the hill

sides. The way also, at other times, lies across open commons gay with purple heather and golden gorse; and then leads into a network of exquisite lanes overshadowed by trees, with high mossy banks, where in spring primroses, violets and blue-bells, and later in the year buttercups, ragged robin,



TUFTON, NEAR WHITCHURCH.

harebells and many another simple flower bloom.

Back to the Winchester-Basingstoke high road and one comes to Tufton with its strange-looking shingled bell turret of the small Norman church, and curious old painting of St. Christopher on the north wall in the nave. There is good fishing in the river hereabouts, and the water-meadows are the haunt of the angler, though the trout do not reach the

size they do between Longparish and Stockbridge, and down at Romsey.

Hampshire has a good many picturesque, quaint and musical village names, and this quarter of the county is rather rich in them. What a strange one is "Freefolk" and what a pleasant sound is that of "Stoke-Charity." At Freefolk there is one of the oldest churches, the little chapel of St. Nicholas Freefolk; and within half a mile there are two others. Freefolk Chapel is a thirteenth-century foundation, and in an old document one reads how it came to be built. A nobleman named William of Chabegrave humbly petitioned the then Bishop of Winchester, Clement, "Servant of the servants of God," that as he, the said William of Chabegrave, lived so far from his parish church, that he could not on account of floods, especially in the winter-time, and other great risks, conveniently go to hear the divine offices, and receive the sacraments of the church, that he might build a chapel on his own estate, and have a chaplain attached to it whom for his maintenance he was prepared to assign a sufficient allowance of his own goods. Evidently the petition was granted and the document is endorsed "Pope's Clements Bull for Freefolk Chapple 1265." This Freefolk Chapel was the parish one with its own priest attached.

One cannot mention Freefolk without a mention at least of Laverstoke, and its famous Mill, which lies but half a mile or so northward upon the banks of the Test. It stands right on the highway, and at once arouses interest and curiosity by reason of its high wall and the policemen who stand on

duty at the entrance. The latter are so entirely out of the picture that one is at once arrested and rendered curious by their presence. Laverstoke is chiefly famous because at this out-of-the-way village is made all the paper for Bank of England notes. The founder of this famous Mill, de Portal by name—the family has nowadays dropped the “de”—was a Huguenot refugee from France, and a descendant of a noble Castilian family, a member of which came to France in the train of Elvira, daughter of Alfonso IV, at the close of the eleventh century. He afterwards founded a powerful family in Languedoc and Dauphiné. At the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes the Huguenot Portals lost their lands, and many of them their lives, but three of them escaped, and found refuge in England.

There is a romantic account of the escape of the children of the Portals from their ancient home, the Chateau de la Portalerie. The story goes that, when the soldiery came to search for the Huguenots in the chateau, a faithful old nurse hid Henri de Portal and his brother Guillaume in an oven, and after the baffled soldiers had gone away they were secreted in wine-casks and safely placed by faithful retainers on board a lugger. Tradition says that they landed at Southampton, where they found a Huguenot colony already established round the French church of St. Julien. Henri de Portal eventually obtained employment in a paper mill at South Stoneham which had been founded by Huguenots who were skilled in the manufacture of paper. It was here that the young refugee learned the trade and became acquainted with

Sir William Heathcote, who was also a young man. Henri de Portal soon impressed his titled neighbour with his cleverness and his charming personality, and Sir William, who was Squire of Hursley, a village some five miles south-west of Winchester, did much to help the young Huguenot on in life. In 1710 the tenant of Bere Mill, by the name of Dean, died, and Sir William offered the lease to his friend; Henri de Portal accepted the offer, and gathering a group of French workmen round him, came to the mill, and started what was ultimately to prove so successful a paper-making venture. In less than ten years papers of various grades were being made in such quantities that it became necessary to take over the neighbouring mill of Laverstoke. The year after he came to Bere Mill, Henri de Portal was naturalized at the Quarter Sessions, and took the Anglicized name of Henry Portall; in the document which naturalized him he is described as of "South Stoneham, Gentleman." The privilege of making the paper for the notes of the Bank of England was granted him in 1727, probably through the instrumentality of Sir Gilbert Heathcote, an uncle of Sir William, who was Governor of the Bank at the time.

So greatly did the paper-making industry flourish that it soon became necessary to build yet another mill at Laverstoke, in the wall of which may be seen the stone bearing the inscription "This house and mill was built by Henry Portall in 1719." The original building itself, however, was replaced some years ago by the present one erected by Sir Wyndham Portal. Here for two centuries the business of

paper-making has been carried on, and handed down in unbroken succession from father to son.

A pretty glimpse of the original Bere Mill, which is still standing, can be caught from the high road, its old roof and mellowed walls being almost hidden by the elms and poplars which surround it. It was to this ancient and quaint yellow brick building, now somewhat decrepit, that Henry Portall came with his bride, a Miss Dorothy Hasher of the neighbouring village of Overton.

The old Bere Mill, oval coat of arms and with its inscription on the wall near the little front porch: "This House and Mill built by Jane the widow of Tho. Deane Esqre. in ye year 1710."—is now deserted, and the only sound, now that the mill wheel and machinery are silent, is that of the water music made by the Test as it passes beneath the red brick bridge, from the parapet of which one can often see the trout lurking amid the weeds.

Only by permission gained from the Bank of England can one visit the factory where the paper for its notes is made, but such a visit is extremely interesting and well worth while. The bank paper is always made from new linen, and needless to say it is made with the greatest care, by an elaborate process, and when made is jealously guarded. Practically all the villagers are employed in the paper mills or work on the Laverstoke Estate, where resides, at Laverstoke House, the head of the family, who is Lord of the Manor.

The new church, standing above a grassy knoll, is a handsome building containing beautiful stained glass; and, over

the altar, a triptych, a copy of the beautiful mediaeval one in the Jacobskirche at Rothenburg. The tomb with a recumbent effigy of one of the Paulets of Herriard used to be in the old church. The village of Laverstoke is modern, but very pretty; the grey-brown cottages, many of them



SUTTON SCOTNEY.

creeper-clad, bordering the elm-shadowed road amid the fruit trees and gay flowers of their gardens.

Our way now lies southward from Freefolk past Folly Hill and Newbarn, and between Laverstoke and Freefolk Woods, with their beautiful trees and pleasant bosage, to a point a mile or so west of Micheldever Station, where one

takes the main Micheldever to Longparish road to its point of intersection with the Whitchurch-Winchester main road. And then along it to Sutton Scotney, where lanes and high roads meet, and where one is conscious from the size of the inns that it was a place of some importance in coaching days. It is a pretty village from which one should certainly wander on to Stoke Charity a mile to the east. A delightful little place, with some black and white thatched cottages and an interesting old church. Stoke Charity is a very ancient manor, whose history goes back to Saxon times, and the church is probably upon Saxon foundations, although it has been rebuilt. Experts will tell you that some of the original building is traceable at the east end of the north aisle, near where the plain chamfered arch serves as an entrance to the vestry ; and in the nave are two bays of solid Norman work, with short octagonal pillars, and there is also Norman moulding over the chancel arch.

Here lie the long dead Hamptons and Wallers of history in their tombs which are in the fifteenth century Chantry Chapel. About seventy years ago, in the wall near the south window, was discovered an old sculpture said to date from the fifteenth or sixteenth century, representing St. Gregory's Pity, the miraculous appearance of Christ at the Mass. This has been transferred to the Waller Chapel. In 1737 the Sir William Heathcote of that day bought the manor, and it is said that the pews and the shingles on the spire are of the oak grown on his estate at Hursley. The bells date from 1614-15, and bear the inscriptions, " Sancta Catherina ora

pro nobis ; Sancta Trinitas ora pro nobis ; God be our Guide,
1614.”
15.

In the churchyard lies buried the uncle and godfather of the famous painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the Reverend Joshua Reynolds.

One's way goes still southward across the breezy heights of Worthy Down until one comes upon the city of Winchester lying in the valley of the Test, which has cut its way here through the chalk ridge that stretches across Hampshire. If one approaches Winchester towards sundown, when the grey-blue smoke is drifting across its tumbled roofs, the wayfarer cannot fail to be intrigued by its mysterious beauty and age-old look, as he stands looking down at it.

Under such conditions one can, perhaps, most easily realize that it was for centuries the heart of England, and even imagine to some extent the dramas which have been played in the dim past in the narrow streets, and ancient houses, and old, grey Cathedral.

CHAPTER VI.

WINCHESTER AND ST CROSS—PLACES OF HISTORY, LEGEND AND BEAUTY.

WINCHESTER is one of the most historic and interesting towns in England, and anyone visiting it who is acquainted with its wonderful history, and who cares at all for beauty of architecture, picturesqueness and that elusive quality—*atmosphere*—will truly love it and come to it again and again. Here at least it seems possible, even in the twentieth century, to become divorced from the stress and bustle of life, and to realize what is really meant by the phrase “an abode of ancient peace.” Oxford conveys to the mind very much the same impression. Of Winchester it has been written: “A city which wins the undying affection of those who dwell under the influence of her charm—it is not in death but in the beautiful tranquility of serene old age that Winchester reposes in her sweet green valley low down among the swelling hills that compass her about.” No English city has a nobler record in the past, or a life more peaceful in our rushing, hasty age.

The city, indeed, lies hidden, as it were, almost in the centre of Hampshire; and, bearing in mind that in ancient times it was rather the custom to build cities or settlements on hills, one may wonder a little at the choice of the spot.

It is a bright town to-day, and the inhabitants, notwithstanding all the centuries of history behind them, have somehow managed to ward off from their loved town that air of somnolence and even decay which so often distinguishes ancient cities. The High Street on a fine morning is, indeed, a bright and busling thoroughfare with good shops, and, if one may say so, equally attractive shoppers; and, even where "improvements" and the building of modern houses have been necessary, considerable care has been exercised to preserve many of the old features in the restored buildings, and to avoid making the new too obtrusively so.

But to many Winchester's great Cathedral, ancient buildings, historic past and general picturesqueness will not be its only charm. For there are, of course, the trout streams and the ancient bridge built where St. Swithin nearly eleven centuries ago built his bridge across the Itchen, and what trout streams those of Winchester are! So pure and bright and sparkling as to call to mind the lines of James Thompson, who wrote:

"The hollow winding stream, the vale fair spread
Amid an amphitheatre of hills."

And those of Ambrose Phillips, which exactly describe the Itchen in many parts:

"The valley brook that hid by alders speeds
O'er pebbles warbling and thro' whisp'ring reeds."

While one is down near the Itchen Bridge one should not forget to wander past the Mill into Cheese Hill Street, where

the old Rectory stands. Alas, it is now a store ! But there is much old oak in it worth seeing.

Here is a city, indeed, in which to linger, for are there not the great Gothic Cathedral, the beautiful old foundation of St. Cross just outside the city walls, and the school of William of Wykeham, the ancient Deanery, and the beautiful old half-timbered Cheyne Court to lure one to linger. While



WINCHESTER DISTRICT.

above the city against the skyline rise the great hills of white chalk St. Giles and St. Catherine, the latter crowned with a clump of beech trees, and scarred with great entrenchments.

The churches of Anglo-Saxon Winchester have all disappeared, and of them there are fewer traces than of the works of the Romans who preceded them, and the Cathedral which we see to-day is that of the first of the Norman and Angevin Kings, and not that of the time of Egbert, of St. Swithun, or

King Alfred. The present building, indeed, owes much to the Conqueror's kinsman, Walkelin, but more to William of Wykeham. The former built the massive tower, and the vast transepts with stone taken from Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight, so it is said ; which was brought up from Southampton on the Itchen. And the oak for the roof came from Hemphage Wood only a few miles up the valley watered by the Itchen. So energetic was the Bishop builder that having got permission of his- kinsman, William the Conqueror, to cut wood for his cathedral roof, he sent carpenters innumerable to Hemphage, and cut down every tree except one long known as " the Gospel oak." William was, tradition says, greatly incensed by this ruthless destruction, and so Bishop Walkelin had to crave pardon of his sovereign.

Great as were the builders of Wykeham's age, few left so great a record behind them as did he who gave to the nation the completed Cathedral, Winchester College, and New College, Oxford. Winchester is far older than its Cathedral, for in pre-Roman times the settlement was known as " Caer Gwent," or " White Castle," which when the Romans came they called " Venta Belgarum," and made of it a place of importance with temples and altars as well as villas, the remains of which have been from time to time brought to light. In Saxon times the city was known as Wintecceaster, and in due time it became the head city of Wessex, and finally that of England itself. Christianity was preached here in 635 by Birinus, and in turn Alfred, Canute and William the Conqueror himself ruled from it, and here the great " Domesday Book" was compiled.

In the reign of Henry I Winchester had so grown that it outrivalled London both in commercial importance and prosperity, but when the city held out for Stephen against Matilda in 1141 it was set on fire, and the damage that was done proved a serious check to its growth as a commercial centre, and in consequence it became greater from an ecclesiastical than a trading point of view. Many parliaments have been held in Winchester, those of the first three Edwards, of Richard II, and of some of the later Henrys ; and many other historical events of importance took place in the ancient city. It was four times besieged and taken during the Civil War ; twice by Waller, and also by Cromwell and Ogle. It suffered greatly from the plague in 1665-6, and through the centuries has seen many royal visitors other than those already named—Charles II and James II among the number.

Winchester may perhaps be said to have reached its zenith of importance under the great Saxon Kings, and during the period that the city was the capital of England. In the days when Wessex stood first among the kingdoms of Saxon England the city was truly the heart of England, and the history of it from the reign of Egbert, who was styled “ King of England ” in 828, down to the Norman Conquest in 1066, and for some time afterwards may be said to be the history of England itself.

Although all traces of the great churches of the age of St. Swithun and his predecessors have passed away, in the British Museum there is the original of Ethelwulf's Charter of 854, in which the King, doubtless acting under the influence

of St. Swithun, made over a tenth part of the Crown lands of Wessex to the Church. King Alfred's Chronicle has it "he booked the tenth part of his lands to God's Praise and his own eternal welfare."

Egbert, who laid the foundation of the Kingdom of England was the first of a long line of Saxon kings who reigned at Winchester, none of whom appear to have been very bad and several of whom were great in the best sense of the word. Ethelwulf (837) took arms and fought against the Danish pirates that had begun to overrun England before the days of Egbert, his predecessor, and Ethelred carried on the struggle. But it was Alfred the Great, born over the Berkshire border at Wantage—a district not dissimilar in character to the country surrounding Winchester—who lends most lustre to the city. Alfred came under the influence of Swithun, as had Ethelwulf, and few kings have had greater or more wise advisers. Swithun was a great man, who built the bridge which bears his name, and the wall round the city, which so long guarded Winchester from the Danish hordes. He was a great churchman as well, and doubtless many of the churches in the Winchester of former days owed their existence to his energy and zeal. He was a great man, too, in respect of more than accomplishment, for when he died he left a wish—such was his humility—not to be buried in the Cathedral, but in the churchyard where passers-by might tread where he lay. He died in 862, having done much to make his youthful sovereign, Alfred, the great man he was. Alfred came to the throne in 871 with a great task in front of him. The Danes

had already burnt Winchester some time before, and were again harassing Wessex. After many battles and lack of success Alfred inflicted a decisive defeat upon Guthrum and his horde, who made peace with the Saxon King at Wedmore. Then Wessex was definitely divided from the Danelau, and the city of Winchester became more than ever the capital of England.

Alfred reigned at Winchester, which became the home of literature, art and education, and it was here that he started his great Chronicle which—it is said he wrote with his own hand. Freeman, the historian, holds that it was thanks to Alfred we have, alone among Teutonic peoples, “ a continuous national record from our first coming into our present land.” Only some thirty years ago it was thought that the copy of Alfred’s Chronicle—of which several were made—now the possession of Corpus Christi College Library, Cambridge, was that written by the King himself ; but this has been irrefutably proved not to be the case. It is nevertheless a precious and, indeed, most wonderful possession. This great King may claim to have been the Father of English Literature, and, as a well-known historian states, to have created English Literature, because with him English History begins. Those who have studied the life of Alfred know that he was one of the great rulers of England—possibly, indeed, the greatest—and not only of England but of the world. He was a great statesman, editor and warrior ; and, many centuries in advance of his age, seeing the value of education, he made Winchester a home of learning, literature and the arts.

Five centuries after Alfred, Winchester was blessed with another great educationalist, William of Wykeham, who left behind him the completion of the Cathedral; Winchester College, commenced in 1387; and New College, Oxford, which he conceived as a home at the University for Winchester scholars.

That there is much of interest in this ancient town goes without saying, but first of all most visitors we fancy, and certainly most Americans, turn their steps towards the Cathedral, which is most pleasantly and picturesquely approached by the archway close to the beautiful fifteenth-century Cross in the High Street, with its picturesque background of old houses. This was once given a coat of paint by the Commissioners! Unbelievable as it may seem this ancient monument was purchased in 1770, by the then owner of Cranbury Park, where Sir Isaac Newton died, Thomas Dummer by name. His intention was to move the Cross, and set it up as an ornament in his park. But Winchester citizens had other ideas concerning their Cross, so they turned out in force and, helped by the apprentices of that day, attacked the Vandal Mr. Dummer's workmen and pelted them out of the city. The attempt to remove the Butter Cross was abandoned, and the would be despoiler of Winchester had to content himself with a stucco replica.

Those who come to Winchester Cathedral by the way we have suggested either in spring or autumn, when the avenue of elms and limes is not too thick with foliage, will obtain a pleasing first glimpse of the Cathedral, which appears

however, somewhat heavy partly owing no doubt to the lowness of the tower. It is when the startling transition from the streets and shops of the modern town has been made to the peace and quietude of the Close, with its old grey Cathedral and red-brick, creeper-clad houses, that one first realizes—and somewhat suddenly—the city's great antiquity.



The Deanery
Winchester

The Cathedral has the distinction of being the longest church in England ; and, indeed, of any mediæval church in the world. Its total length is nearly 560 feet. To describe it fully would need a volume to itself, but there are certain features which strike even the least experienced student of architecture.

Few can enter it without being struck by the exquisite beauty of the nave, which in essentials is Walkelin's original Norman building, the reconstruction of which transformed it into the perfect specimen of fourteenth century and fifteenth century Perpendicular. As one wanders through it one notices, at the west end of the north aisle, the " Cantoria " or Minstrels' Tribune, and the twelfth century door below it : the ancient Norman black marble font with its sculptured scenes from the life of the scholars' patron, St. Nicholas, and its baptismal symbols ; the elegant chantries of Edingdon and William of Wykeham ; the great west window with its early stained glass, which is said to have been made up from that of many other windows after the latter had been injured by the Parliamentary forces during the Civil War ; the altar tombs of Bishops Morley and Harold Brown ; the pulpit formerly belonging to New College, Oxford ; and the wall tablet to the memory of Jane Austen.

The choir and transepts are the oldest part of the present building, and strike one as particularly fine, in the smaller piers and plain groined vaults one is able to distinguish the parts dating from about 1093 from work done after the rebuilding of the tower some twenty years later. In the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in the north transept, are some curious and rough wall paintings, dating from the thirteenth century and in the south transept is Prior Silkstede's Chapel, which is of particular interest to anglers, as it contains the tomb of Izaak Walton, who died in 1683, and a rather incongruous monument to Bishop Samuel Wilberforce.

The oak screen, through which one enters the choir from the nave, is from the design of Sir Gilbert Scott. One sees in this part of the church architecture of various dates, and for that reason it is particularly interesting to the student. Among the most notable features are the enormous piers supporting the central tower, the ceiling of the latter having the arms of Charles I, etc., painted on it ; the traditional tomb of Rufus ; and some beautifully carved dark oak stalls, dating from 1296, in the Early Decorated Style. The pulpit, it should be noted, was the gift of Silkstede in 1498 ; but the Bishop's Throne is modern. There is some magnificently painted glass in the east window dating from the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The reredos, dating from the end of the fifteenth century, suffered a good deal during the period of Tudor unrest, and was in a ruinous condition till some forty years ago when the work of restoration was undertaken. On the top of the stone tracery screens forming the sides of the Presbytery are to be seen the famous mortuary chests, in which Bishop Fox deposited the bones of Kynegils, who was the first Christian King ; Egbert, the first King of all England ; Canute, the Dane ; Edmund, possibly Ironside ; Rufus and other monarchs. The feretory, or the place where the portable shrines of the patron saints were anciently stored, is behind the reredos ; and at its eastern end is a platform on which the shrine of St. Swithun, who was the Bishop from 852-862, once rested. Behind it on the right and left lie the east chantries of Fox, which is very elaborate ; Cardinal

Beaufort ; and of Waynflete, with a delicate and very noticeable canopy. Then there are three Chapels, mainly Early English ; the Lady Chapel partly Early English, partly Perpendicular, with a fine vaulted roof, some elaborate panelling, and ancient frescoes depicting the miracles of the Virgin ; the north Chapel, or Chapel of the Guardian Angels, containing the tombs of Richard Weston, first Earl of Portland, and of Bishops Aymer and Mews. In the southern Chapel, noticeable for its beautiful woodwork, is the chair used by " Bloody " Mary on the occasion of her marriage with Philip of Spain.

The entrance to the crypt is in the north transept, the western part of which is Walkelin's work, and a good specimen of Early Norman architecture, following the usual plan of a Norman church. The eastern part, dating from the end of the twelfth century, is Early English and rectangular.

The foregoing is a very brief description of one of the most interesting and beautiful ecclesiastical buildings in England, and one which historically has no rival, because it is contemporary with the beginning of English History, and has been linked with so many events of the greatest importance in early national life. As one stands in it at the end of the nave, looking towards the choir, one seems to realize how history can be built into stones, and how representative a building can be in its various parts of the days through which it has passed. The rudeness of the Saxon, the solidity of the Norman, the beauty of awakening art of the Decorated period, are all characteristics embodied

in the architecture of Winchester Cathedral ; the greatest beauty of which is perhaps realized and seen on a bright day when the sunshine streams through the mellow tinted glass of the windows, and falls like a cascade of beautifully coloured jewels on to the pavements below them.

A good way of leaving the Cathedral Close is through Kingsgate, dating from the thirteenth century, which has St. Swithun's Church placed above it. This enables one to pass by the house where Jane Austen died in 1817, and the headmaster's house of the famous School, thus the visitor will reach the gateway of the School itself, where, if he feels so inclined, on application at the lodge permission can be obtained to see over the buildings.

As we have already noted, Winchester was a home of learning in Saxon times, and Winchester College, dating from the days of William of Wykeham, nearly five and a half centuries ago, is the oldest institution of its kind in England. The roll of scholars is, indeed, a long one, including in almost every century of its existence some of the greatest names in the Church, State, Arms, Law and Letters. The main building comprises two quadrangles, which are on each side of the gateway, cloisters, and the new building where reside the commoners, or the various masters' boarders. The outer of the two quadrangles consists of the Warden's House, and stables and the brewhouse, the only remaining relic of a group of domestic offices that once stood here. The inner quadrangle contains the old washing place, familiarly known as " Moab," and the beautiful range of buildings including

the Chapel and Hall. The former is one of those survivals that cannot fail to impress the beholder with its very fine oak ceiling, and the windows which though of old design are modern. The brasses are less than half a century old, as at the time of the restorations the originals were removed, stored and—lost. Those to be seen to-day are facsimiles made from old rubbings of the originals. The Hall's chief attraction is its fine roof and wainscotting; and visitors who have been fortunate enough to obtain a glimpse of it during meal times will have noticed the square wooden trenchers still used for breakfast and tea, and formerly for all meals, and the big tub near the door in which the fragments of food have been placed from time immemorial for distribution amongst the poor.

On the west side of the Hall is the Audit Room, containing Flemish tiles, and an Arras tapestry well worth examination. And those for whom history has an interest will surely not overlook the muniment room and library with their wonderful records. The kitchen is at the foot of the steps leading to the Hall, and in the entry is the famous picture "The Trusty Servant." The Cloisters, which lie south of the Chapel, are united with it by the Ambulatory and the Warden's Tower, and are 132 feet square. The enclosed space serves as a burial ground, and contains a small chantry, now used as a Junior's Chapel. The names cut in the walls of the Cloisters, and on the columns are many of them of great interest, being those of boys who afterwards became famous in many walks of life.

Over the entrance to the old schoolroom, which dates

from 1683, is a bronze statue of William of Wykeham, and inside the entrance is the well-known tablet with its mottoes and devices indicating the three ways open in life to the school-boy. Before 1683 the room beneath the hall was used as a schoolroom, and nowadays the boys are taught in the more



OYINGTON.

modern schoolrooms which were built more than three quarters of a century ago. The old one is now the place where concerts and other entertainments are given. The playing fields—which are extensive—are near the river, and are delightfully situated.

Winchester, although not the first school in England, was the first founded upon college lines, and has served as a pattern for public schools of more modern times. Eton College itself owes much to Winchester, for before Henry VI drew up the statutes of his foundation he spent some days at Winchester studying the rules and observances of this ancient foundation. Here at least he found a good motto "Manners makyth Man," and the rule of life for the scholars "*Aut disce, aut discede, manet sors, tertia cædi.*" Then there is, of course, the famous Winchester song, "Dulce Domum," which generations of Wykehamists have sung around the Domum tree, amid scenes of wild enthusiasm on the eve of the breaking up for the Midsummer holidays. The original tree has long disappeared, but the song is still sung, and never fails to draw great crowds to the College precincts yearly to hear it.

As one leaves the College by the great gateway one notices the figure of the Virgin Mary over it, and thereby hangs a tale, for during the Civil War, when Winchester was a Royalist stronghold, and Cromwell himself came to storm it, two old Winchester boys, who were officers in the Puritan army, stood on guard with drawn swords at the entrance of the Founder's Chantry in the Cathedral, and, though Cromwell's army did much damage to the Palace and the Castle, the College was protected by the efforts of these officers and little harm was done.

On the left hand side of College Street are the interesting fragments of Wolvesey Castle built in 1138 by Bishop Henry

de Blois. It was long the Palace of the Bishops. And here Queen Mary stayed at the time of her marriage to Philip of Spain, and here the proud Spaniard was received. Some of the windows are still fairly perfect. Cromwell's soldiers shattered the Castle, and also did much damage to the Royal Palace of Henry III on the Castle Hill above the town. Of the latter, the site of which is now occupied by barracks, there is little to be seen to-day except the Great Hall. This which still happily remains, possesses a treasure, that, of whatever date, is of the greatest interest. It is the reputed "Round Table of King Arthur," which has been made familiar to all readers of Froissart's Chronicle, hanging above the spot where the King used to sit. This is referred to in John Hardyng's Chronicle as

"The Rounde Table at Wyn'ter beganne,

And there it ended, and there it hangeth yet."

Caxton, when he published his "Morte d'Arthur" referred to this table as evidence of the truth of the story. But whatever one may think of mere tradition the table was considered sufficiently notable in 1522 for Henry VIII to show it to his guest, the Emperor Charles. There are many historic memories and events connected with this beautiful example of an Early English Hall. For it was here for centuries that Parliament met, and in it were held two of the most notable trials of history - that of Sir Walter Raleigh, and that of Dame Alice Lisle, who was tried for her part in sheltering fugitives after the Monmouth Rebellion. In a letter written to his wife while he was awaiting trial Raleigh

commented bitterly on the forgotten benefits he had conferred upon the nation by his enterprise, courage and patriotism "All my services, hazards, and expenses for my country—plantings, discoveries, fights, councils, and whatsoever else—malice hath now covered over. I am made an enemy and traitor by the word of an unworthy man. •He hath proclaimed me to be a partaker of his vain imaginings notwithstanding the whole course of my life hath approved the contrary as my death shall approve it." -

From one of the windows of the Castle it is said Raleigh watched his so-called accomplices brought to the block, and thus terrified by the apprehension of immediate death, with the intention of obtaining more evidence from them which would have been wrung in the belief that they would themselves be killed did they not incriminate Raleigh. The sentence passed upon him at Winchester was not for many years carried out. He lay a prisoner in the Tower, and had time in which to write his "History of the World." Eighty-two years later the second trial took place of Dame Alice Lisle, the wife of John Lisle of Moyles Court, near Ringwood, when the infamous and foul-mouthed Judge Jeffries condemned the aged lady to a shameful death.

As one goes up the High Street one reaches the Early English Chapel of St. John, which was founded just before the dawn of the fourteenth century for broken-down soldiers. And then come in succession the Public Park, once the grounds of the Abbey ; the Guildhall, which is worth entering if only to see Lely's famous portrait of Charles II, and many inter-

esting local antiquities. Farther up still is the old Town Hall, with its quaint clock and statue of Queen Anne, and then comes the city Cross and God begot House.

Near the George Hotel is a turning, Jewry Street, which takes one out to Hyde. Here Henry I built in Hyde Mead an Abbey to which eventually the remains of Alfred the Great were brought for interment before the High Altar. Alfred was buried in the Cathedral, and thence removed to Newan Mynstre which he had founded close by. Indeed, so close were the two buildings that the worshippers in one were disturbed by those in the other. During the siege of Winchester in the War between Stephen and the Empress Maud fireballs thrown from Bishop de Blois' Castle set both the city and Hyde on fire, and little of the Abbey where Alfred lay is now left. A few fragments of garden walls, and a gateway to a yard being almost all.

Leland states that on the tombs of Alfred and his son, "was a late found two little Tables of leade inscribed with theyr names." These tombs were destroyed in the eighteenth century by the county authorities when the foundations of the prison were dug, and they permitted the dust and bones of Alfred, the greatest of English kings, to be scattered, and what was supposed to be the stone coffin was broken up and used to mend the paving of a back street !

Alfred's fate seems to have been the common one of most of the Kings buried in Winchester Cathedral, for very few of the Royal dead were allowed to lie undisturbed in their original resting places.

Every one who visits Winchester knows the picturesque West Gate, dating from the thirteenth century, placed astride the steeply climbing street. In a small chamber above the gate are preserved the Standard Winchester measures, and some interesting mediæval armour. Winchester at one time set these standard measures, and the fact is preserved in the so-called "Winchester Quart."



ST. CROSS. WINCHESTER.

CHURCH AND HOSPITAL OF ST. CROSS, WINCHESTER.

There are many delightful spots in this old-world city, and a couple of miles south-west of the town near the river lies St. Cross, which in beauty of conception and in delightful architecture is next in importance to the Cathedral itself. The Hospital church of St. Cross can be pleasantly and best

reached by a path through the meadows by the side of the placid flowing Itchen. Indeed, this way will allow one to miss the village, which has been much spoiled by speculating builders, and come to the exquisite Gatehouse, as it were, directly out of the fields themselves. St. Cross was founded in 1138 by Bishop Henry de Blois for thirteen poor men, provision being made for a hundred others to receive support. Norman builders, as one can gather from many specimens of Gothic architecture in England, had a great distaste for monotony, and in the church of St. Cross one finds architecture in its most bewildering and rich variety. In addition to the founder, both Cardinal Beaufort and William of Wykeham contributed to the beautiful whole which now represents the block of buildings, one finds in pillar and arch and window a great variety of design. St. Cross is the earliest foundation of the ancient hospitals of Hampshire which remain still in existence. For many years after its institution it would appear that the authorities administering the charity were chiefly engaged in disputes and pocketing the income, rather than attending to the interests of the "thirteen poor impotent men, so reduced in strength as rarely or never to be able to raise themselves without the assistance of one another."

Some of the masters of the Hospital in ancient times, we are told, never so much as even saw the buildings; and certain others were very dilatory in the attention they gave to its administration. Indeed, at one period, the Hospital fell into such decay that even the pensioners became scattered. Cardinal Beaufort took the matter in hand and

restored the buildings, and endowed a Brotherhood of Noble Poverty, mainly however, for the benefit of his own retainers. The charity underwent many vicissitudes, but it came through them all, and remained much as it was in the Middle Ages till the middle of the last century, when, after the exposure of existing abuses, the whole foundation was revised, trustees were appointed, and it came to be administered as it is to-day.

The delightful quadrangle, which is surely a home of ancient peace such as is met with nowādays but rarely, is reached by the fine entrance gateway, square and solid-looking with its turret on the left hand corner. Here in the quadrangle on fine days are to be seen the Brothers, sitting about on the old benches, at work in their gardens, or ready to act as guides over the beautiful old buildings. All quaintly garbed in black if of the Blois Foundation, or cardinal red if of the Brethren of Noble Poverty, and each with a silver cross worn on the left breast.

St. Cross, however, was never, as were some in the County, a lepers' hospital. In ancient times charity was entirely in the hands of the religious houses, and the hospitality of St. Cross was not confined to its inmates, but was extended to every wayfarer who came within its gates. William Howitt wrote "not a stranger from the days of King Stephen to the present hour, on presenting himself at that wicket but was, and is entitled to receive bread and beer." As the wayfarer passes into the forecourt he sees the buttery hatch, where, to this day, he may obtain a horn cup of ale and bread

on a wooden platter ; but, alas ! no longer home-brewed or home-baked !

We ourselves have received the hospitality ; and let it be added the ale supplied is better than that with which one meets in most Hampshire inns.

Those who would study a fine specimen of Transitional



Norman architecture will delight in the church of St. Cross, but, in addition to the very excellent Transition work one sees, there are also some good examples of Early English in the nave, the north porch, and some of the windows ; and of the Decorated Period in the west front. Only small traces are left of the Blois' Hospital, which stood on the opposite

side of the quadrangle to that occupied by the church ; the Brethren's houses built by Beaufort lie to the west of the Grass Plot, and are in a long, two-storied building with tall chimneys. The Master's House, which connects them with the lofty Hall and Gateway, is also a portion of Beaufort's building. The Ambulatory, with the Infirmary above, is a sixteenth century building.

Of the exterior beauties of the Hospital the Master's Garden, which is an exquisite bower of old-world beauty, full of homely flowers, and with a picturesque rush-bordered fish pond, the surface dotted with water lilies, ranks high. Indeed, few spots are of serener beauty, and most visitors, we fancy, must leave it envious of those who dwell in this delightful and ancient building and walk its peaceful gardens.

One obtains a charming view of the Hospital from the cinder track through the meadows at a point near a sluice, where the clumps of yellow iris, bulrushes, and osiers grow. Beyond the river and the disused canal rise the white chalk pits that lie at the foot of St. Catherine's Hill, and from the same point one sees the little village of St. Cross to great advantage, as the more modern buildings are somewhat hidden.

It is worth while crossing the stream to ascend St. Catherine's Hill, which is known as " Hills " at the School. It was on this steep, turfed slope that tradition says the author of the College Song, " Dulce Domum," who was one of the scholars kept at school during the holidays by reason of illness, used to wander and spend his time in cutting the turf into

narrow trenches which may still be seen, and who in the end died of home-sickness. Tradition also tells us that he died under the tree beneath the shadow of which he wrote his "Dulce Domum" song. Probably the story is only a legend of which, indeed, there are many attached to Winchester.

CHAPTER VII.

ROUND ABOUT WINCHESTER—THE JANE AUSTEN COUNTRY.

NORTH of Winchester, one comes by way of the sparkling Itchen through smiling meadows to Martyn Worthy, placed a trifle southward of the line, along the high road which leads to New Alresford. There are four Worthys : Abbots' Worthy, King's Worthy, Martyn (or Earl's) Worthy, and Headborne Worthy, and close by Itchen Abbas, all of them pretty villages.

In the church of Headborne Worthy the skilled student of architecture will be able to trace Saxon work, and undeniably Saxon is the stone carving—also greatly mutilated—over the west door. This rood was originally outside the church, for the western portion was not built until the fifteenth century. Below the east window in the little churchyard is the grave of John Bingham, a former rector, the author of "*Origines Ecclesiasticæ*," a monumental and profound work.

In all this little district there are traces of the fact that the Worthys were originally ecclesiastical property, for one meets with the names of Monks' Walk, Nuns' Walk, Barton Abbas, or Abbot's Barton, Itchen Abbas, or Abbot's Itchen, and many other names.

It was hereabouts that Charles Kingsley came fishing after the Itchen trout, and at Itchen Abbas one is reminded

of his visits, for at the old Plough Inn—which, alas, was re-built some few years ago—there used to be a Kingsley room, and in this, so it is said, Charles Kingsley penned his famous “Water Babies,” but he himself has told us how he wrote at least the first chapter of the book “off, without a check, in a brief half-hour at Eversley.”



Nº Itchen Abbas.

AVINGTON, NEAR ITCHEN ABBAS.

Near Itchen Abbas one comes across a rabbit warren on the south-east side of the hill, now a tangled mass of thicket, where once stood a fine Roman villa, the tessellated pavement of which was accidentally discovered many years ago. It was thoroughly excavated and investigated, and then to secure it from injury it was covered over again. The by-roads connecting the charming group of villages which one has

round about here are mostly green and shady lanes, with high banks sweet and beautiful with wild flowers in their due season, that lead down to the water meadows, and cross the little streams on low bridges, with here and there tiny fords through which, in summer when touring motorists are about, the cars and cycles splash amidst a shower of spray. Few portions of Hampshire are prettier than the Itchen Valley where the stream runs twisting through meadows by clumps of willows and alders, swaying the tall bullrushes, and murmuring musically over the shallows, with here and there thatched cottages dotted down by the river-side, and surrounded by tiny gardens in which grow all those old-fashioned flowers of which poets have sung from time immemorial.

The old mill at Abbot's Worthy is a gem of its kind, which would have tempted Constable to paint it, just as did Flatford Mill in the little Essex Valley. Abbot's Worthy, once a part of the land of the monks of Hyde, at the time of the Civil War, was owned by a member of the Capel family, who fell a victim to the bad faith of the Parliamentarians, and was condemned to death and executed. His lands were seized and sold, and at his request, when he died, his heart was placed in a silver box, and was ultimately given to Charles II after the Restoration.

Avington Park, which lies amid thick trees immediately south of Itchen Abbas, has a connection with the "Merry Monarch," although the old house where he stayed was pulled down and rebuilt. Charles was at Avington in company with Nell Gwynn and, if one may believe the records which

have survived, there were fine doings in the old Hall, which belonged to George Brydges, whose wife was the notorious Lady Shrewsbury, mentioned several times by Pepys, who is said to have waited close by, dressed as a page and holding the horse of the Duke of Buckingham, who was her lover, while he fought a duel with her husband.

The road to Alresford runs through marshy river lands, and across a good many bridges made over little streams which empty themselves into the main river. There is a delightful old mill near a bridge, along the road between Ovington and Itchen Stoke, to which many artists come in summer, and where there are a dozen pictures to be had within the circuit of a hundred yards, made to water music of the babbling streams, and the clop-clop of the mill wheel. Here, too, the lover of nature has much to interest him because of the numberless water birds, including moor-hens, coots, and wild duck in their season, and reed warblers, which abound. Here, too, one finds an abundance of those flowers which make the English water meadow sweetly scented, and often an amazingly beautiful sight. Tall meadow-sweet, creamy and pink, stands up amid the reeds by the waterside, in tufted spikes; forget-me-nots nestle on the river banks, and in the water itself white and yellow water-lilies float where still pools have formed in the bends of the river, and huge cow-parsley, decorative rather than beautiful, and patches of king-cups splash the meadows with gold in every direction.

What a delightful lane is that which leads up the hill

past Ovington Church to Alresford. The wayfarer is back in the downlands again with patches of trees in place of low-growing willows, alders, and the herbage of meadows. It was from just round about here that once stood Hempage Wood, from which Bishop Walkelin cut the oak that still upholds the roof of Winchester Cathedral, although nine centuries have passed since that day. We are in the Tichborne country, too, hereabouts, and a little distance south-east of Ovington is the home of the Tichbornes. The house is modern, but the lands have belonged to the family since Saxon times, and although the claim of an ancient scion of the race, who lost his head for conspiring to help Mary Queen of Scots, that his ancestors had dwelt at Ovington before the Conquest is not justified by the facts, there is no doubt that the Tichborne family is one of the most ancient in the county of Hampshire. Naturally, the County, and the countryfolk round about Ovington took a deep interest in the Tichborne trial ; and there are those living, and we have met with them, who still believe that the famous claimant was the missing Sir Roger Tichborne, and not Arthur Orton as was legally decided. The quaint little church, on the green slope to the west of the village, contains some interesting early work, and a Norman chancel, and also an early font. Tichborne House of to-day, built at the beginning of the nineteenth century, replaced the ancient structure which dated from the reign of Henry III.

There are several interesting stories and legends in connection with the family ; the most famous being that relating

to the origin of the ancient Tichborne Dole which for centuries caused poor people from far and near to crowd to the village. The legend runs that in the dim distant past a Lady Mabella Tychborne, the wife of the then Sir Roger de Tychborne, when she lay very ill, besought her husband, who was the



Tichborne.

> SNOWDON

TICHBORNE.

founder of the church, to grant her the privilege of leaving a charity in the shape of a dole of bread to be given to the poor each year at the Feast of the Annunciation. He promised towards this proposed charity the produce of as much land as the Lady Mabella could cover travelling afoot. Whereupon the sick lady rose, and being taken to the park, in spite of her weakness and her nearness to death, contrived to crawl

round a goodly piece of land. The space round which she went is still known by the name of "Crawls." It is, however, more than a hundred years ago since the form of the Dole was changed from, it is said, the distribution of 1900 small loaves, to a sum of money. Lady Mabella, the story continues, when taken back to her bed to die, prophesied the prosperity and importance to which her family should attain so long as the Dole was continued, but left her curse to rest on any descendant of hers who should be mean enough to abolish it; the Tichborne family, she prophesied in such a case, would become extinct. The Dole was altered in form not because of the meanness of any member of the Tichborne family so much as the nuisance that was caused by the crowds of idlers and vagabonds who besieged the village on the days when the loaves were given away.

The wayfarer in this part of Hampshire will doubtless go to the scene of one of the most famous battles of several fought on Hampshire soil, for a mile or so south of Tichborne House lies picturesque Cheriton Mill, and still a little further on is Cheriton Village, to the south-east of which was fought the Battle of Cheriton during the Civil War in 1644. In Lamberry Lane, where some of the fiercest of the fighting took place, are still to be seen some mounds which are supposed to cover the bodies of soldiers killed in the battle; and colour is given to this by the fact that Lamberry Mounds have yielded coins and fragments of armour of Stuart times.

The defeat of the Royalist army, by the forces under Waller, Lord Clarendon says in his famous "History of the

Rebellion," had a very important bearing on the course of the War, and indeed, altered all the schemes of the King's Council. Nearly 20,000 men were engaged, and the forces of the two contending parties were almost equal in numbers, with a slight advantage on the Parliamentary side. The Roundheads were placed in Cheriton Wood, and Waller has been given great credit by military writers for choosing his ground. The Royalist forces were under Forth, Hopton and Colonel Appleyard, the latter of whom was ordered to clear Cheriton Wood and did, and by so doing the fortunes of the day hung in the balance. Had Hopton's wish, to push his advantage home by a charge with both horse and foot along the ridge where the bulk of Waller's army lay, been granted, probably a Royalist and not a Parliamentary victory would have resulted. But Forth was too timorous, and the day was lost.

Cheriton itself is a charming and peaceful village through which the Itchen, as yet only a small stream running in several channels, takes its tortuous course. The church, which has a brick and flint tower, is placed on a small knoll, which some think to be of Celtic origin, and possibly occupies the site of a Druidical temple. Although the church has been much altered in consequence of a disastrous fire during the eighteenth century, it still has the old lancet windows in the chancel.

Beauworth, also in this neighbourhood, a little less than three quarters of a century ago, was the scene of a remarkable discovery of treasure trove. In a field where stood an ancient

chapel some boys were playing when they caught sight, in a depression of the soil, made by a cart-wheel, of a portion of an old metal box, which proved to be a leaden coffer full of what were at first supposed to be old buttons. A scramble took place for possession of the contents of the box, and the father of one of the boys, who came off worst in the fight for possession, lodged a complaint with a Mr. Dunn of Alresford, who was the owner of the land. It was then discovered that the "buttons" were ancient coins, and efforts were made to recover the treasure trove. In all, some 6000 of the coins were collected. They proved to be in Mint condition, and to have been a portion of coinage struck to commemorate peace, and were probably buried during the reign of William II.

The two Alresfords lead one back from the remoteness of these quiet hamlets of the Itchen Valley, and New Alresford is a small but picturesque market town only seven miles north-east of Winchester, with its outskirts pleasantly environed by trees. Both New and Old Alresford, which adjoin one another, are of less importance than in former days, for once the old town enjoyed some reflected glory from Winchester, and Bishop Godfrey de Lucy, in the first years of the thirteenth century, made a remarkable attempt to render the Itchen navigable from Southampton to Alresford, and partially succeeded. The great pond, which is nowadays so prominent a feature, remains as a memorial of his work. In the two centuries succeeding Bishop de Lucy's time there were many mills at Alresford, and the waters of the Aire were kept busy in turning the wheels of fulling

and corn mills ; and, strange as it may seem, in those far-off days the little town as we to-day know it was next in importance to Winchester and Portsmouth. But, in the days of the long French wars, Winchester lost her trade, and Alresford suffered in consequence. Pestilence, fire and misfortune



Broad St. ALRESFORD.

BROAD STREET, ALRESFORD.

overtook the town, and it became in Waynefflete's day so poor that it could not pay the quit-rent with which it was charged. The flying Royalists after Cheriton fight left the town in flames, and much damage was done ere the Parliamentary troops entered it, occupied it, and did their best to quench the fires.

Alresford Church has suffered many restorations and vicissitudes, but it has still a few interesting survivals. In the west tower one sees a curious old stone crucifix, and there are other architectural features worth noting.

Half-way down on the western side of Broad Street there is a little house bearing a tablet that marks the birthplace of Mary Russell Mitford, who was born there on December 16th, 1787. The house cannot have altered much since the day when she and her father, whose extravagancies kept her poor all her life, lived there. Very sedate indeed is the appearance of the home of this early woman novelist and playwright: the tiled roof slopes steeply, the windows are curtained discreetly and the doorway opens on to a paved path that slopes to the road, where there is an avenue of limes, and sycamores. The authoress writes thus of her native town "Alresford is, or will be, celebrated in history for two things: the first—to speak modestly—is my birth; the second is cricket."

Hampshire is the home of cricket, and Alresford played its part during the infancy of that game. But perhaps most of those who come to Alresford other than for a purely business purpose do so because of the little cottage that sheltered one of the first women who devoted themselves seriously to literature.

Dr. Mitford was a gambler and a spendthrift, who not only got through his own inheritance, but also his wife's fortune. He had, we are told, "elegance and manners of distinction, and even good looks to a high degree," in which

last-named quality both his wife and daughter were apparently greatly lacking. When the future authoress had reached the age of seven years the crash came, the Alresford house had to be given up, the books and furniture disposed of, and Mary, her mother and her father migrated to a cheap London lodgings which must, indeed, have proved a great contrast to her old home with its garden, and the pleasant little country town which had given her birth. Dr. George Mitford's luck did not, however, desert him, for he drew a big prize in a lottery, and migrated to Swallowfield, near Reading, and it was from this new home came her contributions to the "Ladies' Magazine," republished as "Our Village," and plays, some of which were tolerably successful.

Broad Street is rather misnamed, for it is more a long extended square than a village street, and slopes down the hill to end with a right and left turn half-way.

Alresford is a rather delightful village, for the houses have a picturesque quaintness, with tiled fronts, and those of brick and timber with little dormer windows and gables, and are placed at irregular distances back from the road, with bow windows above the foot-paths, and with the gardens in summer often a mass of uncontrolled bloom.

A little to the south of the village is Bishop's Sutton, where once stood the ancient Palace of the Bishops of Winchester, in the meadows near the church ; not a fragment of which now remains. The church, however, contains a considerable amount of old work, with an early sixteenth century brass, and some still earlier arches in the belfry. The chancel is



AT RESFORD

Early decorated, and there are original Norman windows in the nave, remarkable for their small size.

On one's way to Alton, the wayfarer, by making a diversion to Ropley, a large village where the older houses are picturesque and struggle up hilly streets, touches the Pilgrims' Way, although some authorities dispute its exact direction. The chapel has been much restored and is of no particular interest or beauty. The road between Ropley and Chawton is steep, but the surface is good, and the views that one gets are very fine, and in their character and beauty very typical of this part of the country. There are plantations of larch alternating with grassy slopes on which are dotted giant beeches, with here and there clumps of hazel, and old thorn trees which in spring are great masses of white blossom. Just before Chawton the road curves down till it passes under the Meon Valley line. Just at the corner where the Gosport and Alton road intersects at Chawton there stands a low square-built, ordinary-looking house, which to-day is divided into workmen's dwellings, and a village club. The door opens right on to the street itself. It was here a century ago that there lived the woman writer who was destined to become a classic. This cottage was one of Jane Austen's Hampshire homes. Here she wrote her tales, "Emma" and "Persuasion"; and, as has been recorded, sat in her little room with a pocket-handkerchief by her side with which to cover up the pages of her manuscript should anyone intrude, and catch her at her task. It was here, too, that her health broke down, and caused her removal to College Street, Win-

chester, in 1817, where she died. Her death certainly robbed English literature of a great writer, who had, in all probability, by no means reached her zenith of literary expression.

Jane Austen, one of the greatest of English women novelists, was a true Hampshire woman, for she was born in December,



JANE AUSTEN'S HOUSE, CHAWTON.

1775, at Steventon, a sleepy little village amid green and pleasant country, though rather flat and lacking the beautiful trout streams, fine houses and beautiful parks of other parts of the county. Steventon lies almost equi-distant between Basingstoke and Whitchurch, a mile or so south of the Winchester to Basingstoke line. It was here that she lived with her family at the Rectory. The spired church, of

which her father was the rector, stands a little distance from the village, and not far from the railway line on the edge of an oak and hazel copse ; but there are no memorials of the Austens at Steventon remaining to draw the literary pilgrim to the spot, for the Rectory in which Jane Austen was born has disappeared. It was in this quiet spot that she, when twenty-one, commenced that wonderfully perfect story "Pride and Prejudice," and in the following year "Sense and Sensibility." In 1798 she completed "Northanger Abbey."

Where Jane Austen obtained her knowledge of human nature, which so distinguished her works, is a mystery, for Steventon to-day is a true sleepy hollow, eight miles or so away from the nearest town, and still more "sleepy," one may imagine, more than a century ago.

It was in 1801 that Jane Austen migrated to Bath, which has always been a great literary town, and four years later to Southampton where the family dwelt in rooms in Castle Street, and then in 1807 the Austens settled at Chawton, and it was from here that her works, "Sense and Sensibility," "Pride and Prejudice," and "Mansfield Park" were at length published. Ten years at Chawton, and her life was brought to a close at the age of 42.

Chawton House, just outside the village, and standing on the skirts of a wide-spreading, grassy lawn, is picturesque ; but the church, which lies a little way off the drive between the lawn and the road, was rebuilt after being almost destroyed by fire in 1871. The Austen family have a connection with

the Knights of Chawton, who owned this fine Elizabethan mansion. Jane Austen's second brother was adopted by his cousin, the owner of the property, who was childless, and succeeded to Chawton on the death of the man who had adopted him.

Alton, a mile or so north of Chawton, is set amid pleasant country, and the roads are good, and eastward there is well-wooded, hilly and beautiful country right to the Sussex border, with fine views of Hindhead, and the beautifully-wooded land of Woolmer Forest. Alton itself is just a small country town standing at the head of the Wey Valley, with the high road running through it, and possessing a history like that of many other Hampshire towns going back to Saxon times.

Outside Alton is Normandy Hill, which name possibly commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Alton by Henry Beauclerc and Robert of Normandy in 1101. The last quarter of a century has seen many changes in the ancient market town, and a interesting survival of old times, the Caige, with its barred window and imposing door, disappeared some years ago, though not a few of the older Altonians tell tales even to-day of the time when tramps and beggars were shut up there by the local authorities, to be fed through the iron bars by charitable townsfolk who pitied their misfortunes. The inns, too, have changed immensely during even the last five and twenty years, for Alton in the old coaching days was an important town, and had a once famous coach known as the Alton and Farnham Machine, which did the forty-seven miles' journey in about fourteen hours, to

the wonderment of the travellers of those days. Although the old inn-yards have disappeared, there are some picturesque corners in the town for those who have time to seek them, and in the immediate neighbourhood there are farmhouses dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as artists love to paint.



Alton to-day, although it has not the importance of a century ago or more, when it was a centre where silk, serge, and other cloths were manufactured, and was famous for its ale, and the "Friends" in whose hands much of the trade lay, is still a rather important country market town with paper mills and breweries which have taken the place of the wool and silk mills of former days. It is also the centre of a

hop district, which is increasing in size yearly, and, because it possesses such a network of roads and has a railway, Alton forms a very good place from which to visit the surrounding country. That to the north, towards South Warnborough, is especially beautiful, and, indeed, has been described by Arthur Young as the "finest ten miles in England." Certainly the scenery is delightful, hilly and well-wooded, and with a charming valley of one of the branches of the Wey between Alton and Farnham the scenery of which earned the encomium already referred to.

Alton saw stirring times during the Civil War, and during the night of December 12-13, 1643, the Parliamentary forces, under Sir William Waller, took up a position on the hills above Alton to the west. On the following morning they were discovered in considerable strength by the Cavaliers. Lord Crawford, who was in command of the Royalist troops, went off along the Winchester road to warn Hopton, a Royalist leader, and bring relief to the handful of Cavaliers left behind under the command of Colonel Boles.

The latter, although greatly outnumbered, withdrew his handful of men to a spot on rising ground near the parish church of St. Lawrence. Here they held out for some time, aided by the burning of a house, the smoke of which drove in the faces of the attacking Parliamentarians. At length the latter rushed the churchyard, and Colonel Boles and his men were ultimately driven from the building, and a fierce fight took place. The Cavaliers, holding the churchyard wall, had not retired at the first onset, and most of these



ISINGTON, IN THE HOP COUNTRY NEAR ALTON

were slain around the door of the church. Then the door was swung to and fastened, and the attacking force threw hand grenades against it and through the windows, and after a stout resistance the door crashed inwards, burst from its hinges, and the Parliamentarians swarmed into the Church. The Cavaliers had piled their dead horses in the aisles to serve as breastworks, and behind these they fought stubbornly, but in the end they were overwhelmed by numbers, killed almost to a man, and their gallant commander, Richard Boles, fell, fighting to the last. The inscription on the pillar of the nave recording his gallant deeds is the facsimile of that erected in Winchester Cathedral.

The door of the church to this day bears evidences of the fierceness of the fight in the many bullet marks which remain. Few churches of Hampshire have more of interest for the wayfarer who has any gift of imagination, and can when standing and looking at the shattered and scarred door visualize that struggle of long ago in the keen air of a December day. There are some interesting fifteenth century wall paintings in the church, and also some early brasses worth notice.

But, though Alton's most striking historic event is that we have just recorded, it is by no means the only one, for it was also the battle ground of Saxon and Dane, and there were several other skirmishes fought there during the Civil War.

In Gilbert White's "Antiquities of Selborne" there is a mention of another historical event connected with Alton with a gallant and romantic ring about it. He tells how when

Simon de Montford had been defeated and killed at Evesham, one of his supporters, Adam Gurdon by name, Bailiff of Alton, "kept up the War, entrenching himself in the woods of Hampshire, towards the town of Farnham," and in a wooded spot



ROPLEY.

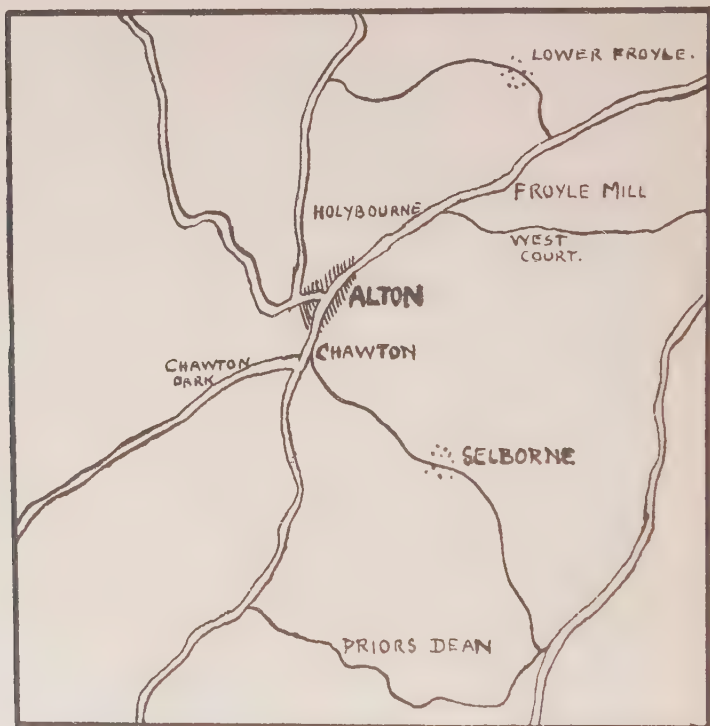
in the valley of the Wey he met Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I, in single combat, the latter having challenged him. Gurdon was wounded, and it is said the Prince offered his life and friendship if he would yield. Another account has it that Gurdon was sent a prisoner after the fight to the Queen at Guildford, who was entreated by the Prince to regard

his late opponent mercifully because of the great valour he had shown. At any rate, Gurdon became a loyal subject of Edward, and was made keeper of Woolmer Forest, near which is Temple Farm, standing on the site of Gurdon's ancient manor-house.

Along the highway from Alton to Farnham, just beyond the seventeenth century almshouses, stands the Grammar-school founded by John Eggar, a yeoman, in 1683, one of those charming and ancient buildings of mellowed and time-tinted bricks, with stone mullioned windows, and quaint chimney stacks with which it is always so delightful to meet.

From Alton, before going southward to Selborne, we visited Holybourne lying beneath the ridge on which Waller's troops assembled before they swept down upon the little town on that winter morning of long ago. It is worth while climbing to the summit on a clear day, or even on one of cloud and sunshine such as seems, indeed, so admirably to bring out the qualities and beauty of Hampshire scenery, because of the view which extends right away to Hindhead, Horsedown, Beacon Hill, and the far distances north and south of one's outlook. From it one can see right over the Surrey border, and away south eastward into Sussex. The Surrey hills lying north eastward on a misty day, a purplish-grey line with the nearest of them shading into green. Holybourne has a holy spring in a lane, once famous and much resorted to. The church has been much restored, but has many details of early English work still traceable. The two Froyles are worth going a little along the Alton-Guildford

road to see, and then northward along a by-lane to Lower Froyle, chiefly because of the network of delightful lanes leading to sequestered and picturesque villages, which, if



ALTON DISTRICT.

they do not appeal to motorists, certainly do so to pedestrians and cyclists, though the latter must beware of punctures, because of the flints.

CHAPTER VIII.

BASING HOUSE—ITS FAMOUS SIEGE—ODIHAM AND ITS MEMORIES OF THE PAST—BRAMSHILL AND "THE MISTLETOE BOUGH"—EVERSLEY AND CHARLES KINGSLEY—A BURIED CITY.

BASINGSTOKE makes an excellent centre from which to explore the comparatively unknown portions of north-eastern and central northern Hampshire, including the remarkable Roman city of Silchester just within its boundaries. Basingstoke itself is to-day a bustling manufacturing town of no particular interest architecturally, but historically so chiefly from the part it played during the Civil War. It is nowadays a borough and a market town, standing on a little stream, the Lodden, and with an important railway system radiating from it. It would not be altogether inaccurate to call the Basingstoke district the "Charles Kingsley Country," as within it lies old Basing, Odiham, Eversley, Silchester, Aldershot, Farnborough, Hackwood Park and Herriard Park, all places familiar to him, and concerning most of which he wrote.

Pleasantly situated among well-wooded country and with certainly very pretty surroundings, Basingstoke itself, whether seen from the railway, if one comes to it in such manner, or from the higher land above it, presents anything but an attractive appearance owing to its present-day industrial character, and the multiplicity of matchbox-like workmen's dwellings monotonous in their uniformity, and great engineering sheds, which at first strike the eye. But when one

has gone down the hill from the station, and up the hill to the town the traveller will find that the latter is by no means as uninteresting as it looks.

In the square on market day, indeed, one finds a pleasant bustle, and country types and characters which, alas, are becoming yearly less frequently met with. Basingstoke's two architectural treasures are undoubtedly the rather fine Tudor Church of St. Michael and All Angels, and the beautiful ruins of Holy Ghost Chapel. The town figures in " Domesday Book " with Kingsclere and Hurstbourne Tarrant as equally bound to provide a day's entertainment for the King, when passing this way, which was probably compounded by a certain tax or quantity of corn, etc., to be provided for the use of the Royal household. In 1261 Walter Merton, of Oxford, founded a Hospital for aged Priests in the vicinity of the church. The town was incorporated in the reign of James I, and received its first Charter from that monarch. And at one time had considerable woollen manufactures, and did a good trade in those fabrics and silk. Richard White, the historian, who died in 1612 ; Sir George Wheler, Oriental Traveller, once vicar of Basingstoke and founder of the Parish Library which is kept in the church ; Thomas Warton, who became Poet Laureate and professor of Poetry at Oxford ; and Sir James Lancaster, a celebrated Elizabethan sailor and an explorer of the far north—all had connection with the town. And then there was the Rev. Charles Butler, who devoted his time to the study of the bee, and wrote a little work upon it with an extraordinarily long title, of which

the following is a condensation : " The Female Monarchy, or the History of Bees showing their Admirable Nature and Property, their Generation and Colony, their Government, Loyalty, Art, Industry, Enemies, Wars, Magnamity, etc." In this strange book there are many amusing pages, and the



virtue of honey as a remedy for almost all the diseases to which man is heir is set forth ; and one is told, amongst other things, that " it's good against the biting of mad Dogs and serpents being drunk ; good against Sickness and Surfeits." Doubtless the author was led to write his treatise by reason of the fact that bee keeping has been for generations much

followed in Hampshire, and Hampshire honey has been famous since the Middle Ages.

In the church of St. Michael and All Angels, which stands in the oldest part of the town still surviving, Basingstoke possesses a fine specimen of Late Perpendicular work. The nave was erected in the time of Bishop Fox, of Winchester, and its pillars are particularly graceful and charming. There are in the church some good seventeenth century brasses, and the curious tracery of the windows should also be noted.

The beautiful ruins of Holy Ghost Chapel, which are familiar to all railway travellers who pass through the town, stand in an old cemetery known as "the Litten," a word derived from Lictun—meaning a corpse enclosure. The chapel was once a beautiful building in the Late Perpendicular style, erected for the Guild of the Holy Ghost by the first Lord Sandys and Bishop Fox about 1525. The remains chiefly consist of the south and east walls, and a beautiful hexagonal tower with fragments of a staircase. But several other relics of the Chapel, such as pulpit hangings, and a rich altar hanging cloth, are still preserved at Mottisfont Abbey near Romsey.

Two miles to the east of Basingstoke itself is the picturesque village of Old Basing. The railway has somewhat spoiled it, but it is nevertheless charmingly situated on the banks of the Lodden, and when one reaches it one finds a real village of old red brick, which has apparently stood still, as regards both development and its life, while its neighbour Basingstoke has passed from the stage of a sleepy ancient market

town to a place of considerable industrial importance, as well as being the active centre of an agricultural area. Basing has indeed, stood still for several generations. The Lodden is delightful here, and adds greatly to the picturesqueness of the village as it flows on its way through great beds of reeds, and there is a charming mill on the north side of the railway which is in character with the old world atmosphere of the village. Most travellers will agree with us that Old Basing has reason to be proud of at least three things: its picturesque situation, its fine old parish church, and Basing House, with its gallant memories of the struggle between King Charles and his Parliament.

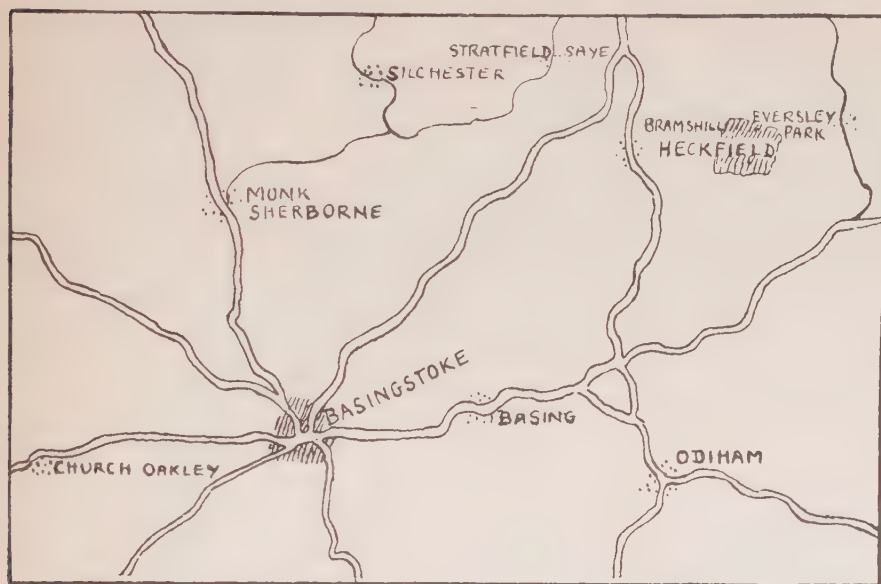
The church, set on rising ground with an imposing seventeenth century red brick tower and red tiled roofs, is one of the finest in the county, and fortunately has not been greatly or recklessly restored. Originally a Norman building, some Perpendicular work was added in the early part of the sixteenth century by one of the Paulets, Dukes of Bolton. There are many interesting things within the church, and outside of it are traces still remaining of the stormy incidents of War which raged around it in the long ago. For some unknown reason Cromwell's soldiers, and the Puritans who succeeded them, never injured the image of the Virgin and Child in a niche over the west window. Remains of the Norman church can be traced in the plain round arches under the central tower north and south. The Early English period is represented in the old apsidal chancel. The transepts have been replaced by Chantry Chapels. The high east and

west tower arches, and the arches and piers of the nave arcades, are mostly of brick and plaster, and are probably a restoration of the old Transitional Norman. It seems likely that the work was done after the Civil War, when appeals were made in most churches which had suffered for funds to carry out this purpose. There are four altar tombs of the Paulet family between the chancel and two chapels under late Perpendicular arches.

Around Basing House there centres much of romance, and there is also the story of the gallant defence of the great building made by John Paulet, 5th Marquess of Winchester, during the Civil War. There are, indeed, few more picturesque or historic ruins or spots in the whole County than what remains of the Castle of Basing. Originally the latter was built about the time of the Norman Conquest by one of the Ports, of which the present family of Paulets, Dukes of Bolton, are a branch ; but of this castle little remains other than fragments incorporated during the sixteenth century in the magnificent mansion built by the first Marquess of Winchester, who summed up his life very adequately in the following lines :

“ Late supping I forbear,
Wine and women I forswear
My neck and feet I keep from cold.
No marvel then, tho’ I be old,
I am a willow, not an oak ;
I chide, but never hurt a stroke.”

He built for himself, at Basing, the stateliest home in England, and made Queen Elizabeth herself, whom he entertained, envious. According to a story, the Queen declared that if Lord Winchester had only been younger she would have had it in her heart to have taken him as a husband. It is recorded that he, "got, spent, and left, more than any Subject



BASINGSTOKE DISTRICT.

since the Conquest." With his new building was incorporated the Gatehouse of the old castle which Fuller declared was "as large as the Tower of London." This Marquess of Winchester, who died in 1572, at the age of 97, held high offices under three Sovereigns, and when once asked how he had managed to do this, wittily replied, "By being an osier

rather than an oak." That is to say he bent before the wishes of his sovereigns, rather than standing firm for any particular principles or views of his own.

On the breaking out of the Civil War John Paulet took the necessary steps to prepare his house to withstand the attacks of the Parliamentary troops. A hundred musketeers came marching from Oxford on July 31st, 1643, and "were thrust into the place which from that time became a garrison." The whole house was fortified, and later in the year, when it was known that Waller was about to march to the place with a strong army, additional men were sent to it for defence. There is no better account of the siege, which lasted from July 1643, till November 1644, than that contained in the diary of the Marchioness of Winchester, John Paulet's second wife. She tells us how Basing Castle, the seat and mansion of the Marquess of Winchester, stands on rising ground, having its "forme circular, encompassed with a brick rampart lyned with earth, and a very deep trench, but dry." It would appear that Lord Winchester was by no means anxious to take part in the dispute between King and Parliament, but he was forced to range himself on one side or the other, chiefly because his castle was a very important stronghold on the great road to the west, and it was impossible to avoid being drawn into the conflict. So he took up arms for his King, and having taken them up he never faltered but saw the thing through to the bitter end with a courage which immortalized him, and earned for him the admiration of friends and foes alike.

The first attack on the house was repulsed with such heavy

loss, although the attacking force under Waller numbered 7000 horse and foot, that the Parliamentarians were forced to retire to Farnham. Then came the King's Army under Lord Hopton to repair the damage done to the castle, and yet more strongly fortify it. During the spring of 1644 the Parliamentarians decided to besiege Basing, which they had failed to carry by assault ; and a few months later the siege was renewed in great force, and from that time till October, 1645, fighting went on round and about Basing with occasional pauses ; and no less than two thousand men were killed in the many skirmishes and sorties, and the artillery attacks upon the place. The stories of the sorties are set out in the diary to which reference has been made in a very lively fashion, and we read how a party would come out of Basing at night to seize or destroy one of the big guns of Colonel Morley ; or " to see the countenance of the enemy." On another occasion 50 foot were sent towards Basingstoke under the cover of a mill and hedge, " whilst our horse forced theirs into the towne." The defence never wavered although we are told Lord Winchester was shot " through the cloaths," and also on another occasion hurt by a shot.

In July, 1644, Colonel Morley summoned Lord Winchester to deliver up the place in order " to avoid the effusion of Christian blood." The reply was " Sir, it is a crooked demand, and shall receive its answer suitable. I keep the house in the right of my Sovereign, and will do it in spite of your forces ; your letter I will preserve as a testimony of your Rebellion. Winchester." And so the siege went on, often just when

they were sorely needed provisions were supplied "as if by miracle," as Lady Winchester says in her journal.

In October, 1645, however, Cromwell himself arrived before Basing with three regiments of horse and three of foot, and took up a position for reconnoitring the defences on Winklesbury Circle—a vast entrenchment having a vallum—and a fierce attack was made upon the place. And then on the morning of October 14th, 1645, having battered down large portions of the walls overnight, the Parliamentary troops waited whilst Cromwell engaged in prayer and meditation, and then rushed in and stormed the place like a flood. And we are told that "Many poor creatures died like rats in the vaults in which they were shut up through a fire which raged furiously." Terrible scenes took place; the daughter of Dr. William Griffith was killed by the soldiers because she bitterly upbraided them for their cruel treatment of her father. All together about a hundred people were killed after the house had been taken.

The loot was great, including the magnificent furniture and many art treasures, of which Cromwell himself received a considerable share. It was at his suggestion that leave was given to the whole country-side to come and carry away the ruins, and use the brick and stone for building, and thus in the farmhouses and other buildings of the neighbourhood doubtless many of the "stones" of Basing, and beams and bricks are incorporated. But still to this day there are the huge mounds of brick and stone on the site of the magnificent mansion which was thus destroyed. The area of the



MILL. AT OLD BASING

works with the gardens and the entrenchments at the time of the siege covered a space of nearly fifteen acres, and nowadays one may stroll over a large stretch of green forming the eminence which marks the fallen and turf grown ruins which are covered by fine old ash and thorn trees, which latter in spring are a mass of exquisite white blossom. Near the well, and on the top of hillock, are portions of wall, and one can gather in some measure the strength of the place. Great masses of ivy, too, cover much of the remaining brickwork, and from the thickness of the stems of the ivy it must have been growing there for centuries.

John Paulet, Marquess of Winchester, stands out one of the great figures of the Civil War, and, as Mr. Robert Mudie shows in his "History of Hampshire," the Marquess was actuated not so much by a love of royalty as his realization of the meaning of his family motto, "Aimez loyauté"; which may be freely translated "Keep Loyal." It is said that he scratched these words on each window in Basing Castle during the siege, and one sees still the motto on the hatchments of the family in Basing Church.

The castle was never rebuilt, though for a time a smaller house, long since forgotten, was erected on the site. The chief fragment of the old building is the gatehouse on the north side, covered with ivy, and at the time of our visit still tenanted. Over the gateway, through which one passes to wander among the ruins, are carved the arms of the Paulets, three swords in pale, points in base.

To-day the battered walls are ivy-clad and the earthworks are covered with grass, flowers and herbage, and the fragments of rose red walls are half-hidden by grassy banks where many of the valiant defenders were buried. To-day the canal from Basingstoke runs round a part of the ruins, and encircles



PEACOCK CORNER, OLD BASING.

the portion of the walls, with its reedy and weed grown waters, where stands the dove-cot which is perhaps the best known feature of the ruins. From this canal years ago when it was being cut quantities of cannon balls, swords, and skeletons were taken; and doubtless there still remain buried many relics of a similar kind.

Near the village there is a chalk pit known as "Oliver Cromwell's Dell," and "Slaughter Close," is in a field near the bridge across the water.

The Marquess of Winchester's life was spared, but under a charge of high treason he was imprisoned with his wife in the Tower, and his lands were confiscated. In the end he retired to Englefield, his wife's property, and at the Restoration his own property was given back to him. For the great losses the family had suffered by the destruction of Basing no recompense was made, only handsome promises, by the "Merry Monarch." On his death John Paulet, the defender of Basing, was buried at Englefield, and Dryden wrote his epitaph which appears on the monument, and contains the following fine lines :

"Ark of thy Age's faith and loyalty
Which (to preserve them) Heav'n confin'd in thee,
Few subjects could a King like thine deserve,
And fewer such a King so well could serve."

A couple of miles eastward from Basing is Nately Scures, a small hamlet which many would overlook, but which should not be missed because of its tiny Norman church—certainly one of the smallest if not the smallest in England. It adjoins a farmhouse on the right hand side of the high road. Built of flint, it is as plain as the outside of a Quaker's meeting-place. The little church is overshadowed by a magnificent oak. On the occasion on which we visited it, it was a bright summer's day, but the place was sadly melancholy by reason

of the rankness of its grass, and the lack of care of the graves that dotted the churchyard.

By a pleasant southward road we came to Odiham skirting a pretty piece of woodland, and lying under the spur of hills south of the Basingstoke Canal at the junction of the Alton and Farnham high roads. On the right hand side of the road, a mile or so south-west of the town at Warnborough, amid some trees stands a fragment of a ruined tower, part of the Norman Castle of Odiham, where nine centuries ago a little garrison of thirteen men held out for a fortnight against the men of Louis of France who had been invited by the Barons to help them in their struggle against King John. This gallant little band only surrendered in the end because of a promise that their freedom and arms were left to them. At this castle, too, the great Simon de Montfort stayed and hunted in the district. And possibly in the tower which still stands King David of Scotland himself was imprisoned.

Odiham, anciently known as Woodyham, was a royal manor from Saxon times, and when Palace Gate farm was rebuilt, a quarter of a century ago, the excavations which were made uncovered the foundations of an octagonal tower, and there are still remains of an underground passage on the site of the Palace of the Wessex Kings. King John came to Odiham several times, and it was from here he set out to meet the Barons at Runnymede. He returned after the granting of Magna Charta to the Castle; not, as one may imagine, in the best of humours. His daughter, Eleanor, was granted the Manor of Odiham on the occasion of her

first marriage. Afterwards she married Simon de Montfort, and when he fell at Evesham she fled for refuge at Porchester, and Odiham from that time declined in importance. It was, however, the dower of three Queens, and was in good repair when Elizabeth visited it. Odiham itself is a delightful old village with an unusually wide street, which was possibly rendered necessary by its importance in the old coaching days.

Odiham Church is a fine building standing tree-enshadowed and with its low, square pinnacled tower, not a stone's throw from the ancient almshouses which raise their lofty and picturesque chimney stacks above their charming red-brown and lichen-stained roofs. The church is a large one, and its architecture ranges through several periods from Early English to the Perpendicular. The tower is seventeenth century, and in the interior are oak galleries, a pulpit of the same date, and an uncommon circular font of a type we have more frequently seen in Normandy and Brittany than in England. In the vestry floor of the south aisle and in other parts of the church are some interesting fifteenth and sixteenth century brasses. The church is set somewhat behind the houses of the main street, near the open space known as the "Bury" where the old stocks and whipping-post still stand railed round and protected.

During the Civil War Odiham had its share of excitement, and, situated mid-way between Basing House and Farnham where the rebels had their headquarters, was frequently visited by the contending forces, and at least one fierce

engagement took place in the neighbourhood. The Round-heads on one occasion rode up to the church, and drove out the vicar with pistols held at his head. One of them by accident or design was fired, and a woman in the congregation, it is recorded, "died of fright." The vicar's wife, who was expecting a child, was driven out of the vicarage into the snow, and might have died with her infant had not a neighbour had the courage to receive her into her house and care for her.

There was a Grammar School here, founded by Robert May in 1694. And the first master of St. Paul's School, London, was an Odiham man, William Lillie, who, we are told, travelled as far as Jerusalem in his youth, and according to Fuller died in 1522 of the plague. The Register of Marriages contains a record for January 4th, 1784, of a curious wedding of Charles Hambledon and Mary Seamol, the latter of whom, after the ceremony, to her astonishment discovered that her husband was like herself a woman !

We may well make our way down to North Warnborough, one of the prettiest of villages, which lies scattered on the banks of the charming little Whitewater, a typical chalk stream. The old cottages with their overhanging upper stories are just of the kind to recall rural England of long ago, and to tempt artists to paint pictures. And round about here along the roads are some delightful inns. There are, too, many streams lazily flowing through the meadows, in which have been constructed many watercress beds ; singing along by the roadsides, and here and there widening out into little pools, and rendering the meadows, in which one catches

glimpses of lazy Alderneys, particularly rich in pasture, and in summer-time carpeted with a perfect galaxy of wild flowers. Here one sees patches of golden kingcups, ox-eyed daisies, and sprays of forget-me-nots—bordering the little pools



ODHAM.

ODHAM.

D. SPOWTON.

and along the banks of the streams—which seem to have taken the colour of their modest flowers from the sky above them ; and in their season there are the upstanding yellow flags, and the beautiful mimulus.

Leaving this little village one may take the high road across Hook Common, and then turning eastward go through Hartleyrow to Hartford Bridge, and at the beginning of Hartford Bridge Flats bear off across Eversley Common to Bramshill Park, which lies to the east. Here right in the extreme north-eastern portion of the county lies Bramshill, set amidst pinewoods, in its beautiful park, by far the finest Jacobean house left in Hampshire, and, indeed, hardly excelled by any other in England. The house forms to this day a perfect specimen of the architecture of the seventeenth century, when it was built, as Fuller says, "by the last Lord Zouche in a bleak and barren place." Now, however, neither barren nor bleak. Successive owners have been wise and truly admirable in that they have allowed no destroying hand of the restorer or the renovator to be laid upon it. The gardens remain much as they were in Jacobean times, with beautiful terraces and alleys ; while in the noble old hall itself are wonderful ceilings, wainscotted walls, old oak floorings, wide staircases and wonderful great open fireplaces with dog irons. It is a brick built house with stone mullions. The terrace front is one of its greatest beauties, with its pierced parapet, and at the eastern end is the troco terrace where the old game was played, some of the rings, cues and balls used for which are still preserved.

Naturally Bramshill, with its many secret doors and sliding panels, has a ghost, who is called "the White Lady," and is said to haunt the Fleur de Lys bedroom ; and Bramshill claims to have been the scene of the tragedy celebrated in

Samuel Roger's poem, and recorded in the well-known ballad, "The Mistletoe Bough" of Haynes Bailey. The old oak chest which was originally associated with the story was removed from Bramshill a century ago, but another chest is still pointed out as the hiding-place which was destined to prove also the coffin of the young bride.

There is a fine avenue of beautiful Scotch firs from the house to Eversley, and in the late summer the picture one gets when making one's way towards that famous village is a delightful one, made up of dark pines, purple heather, and sunlight and shadow racing across the stretches of golden gorse. Eversley Common is delightful and of wide extent, and the church, rectory and farm lie at the bottom of a rather steep descent from it just outside the limits of Bramshill Park. The village of Eversley lies right on the border of Berkshire, by the Blackwater—a peaty stream—about a mile distant amid wild moorland. The church and churchyard, in a sheltered green spot with trimmed yews, are singularly peaceful and charming, the former ivy-clad and of red brick. It stands between the rectory and the farmhouse, and within is delightful by reason of its perfect taste, and the sense of comfort and restfulness. Charles Kingsley, who contributed to English fiction that classic "Westward Ho!" came as a curate to Eversley in 1842, and after a brief absence returned to it as its rector. With the coming of Kingsley this remote Rectory, we are told, "soon became a centre of inquiring spirits" whilst the rector was looking after "his parish with enthusiasm, writing, reading, fishing, walking,

preaching, talking, with a twenty parson power." It was of this district that Kingsley wrote of the "grand old moor stretching your brown flats right away towards Windsor for many a mile" and pictures "the long fir-fringed ridge of Easthampstead ending suddenly in Caesar's camp." He loved Hampshire and its scenery, and one finds many references to the county and its beauties in his writings.

From Eversley one goes along just inside the county border across Eversley Green and the Whitewater, past Heckfield Place to Heckfield, lying almost on the border of Berkshire, and then to Strathfieldsaye, the estate given to Wellington by the nation after Waterloo, and held by a tenure banner which the descendants of the Duke send to Windsor on each anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Then our road lies past wooded hills, and through narrow and winding lanes, past true Hampshire thatched cottages, farms nestling amid the clumps of trees, and manor-houses dating from Tudor times. Thus one find the way to Silchester, that wonderful survival of the dim past which lies around its small gorse-clad common, and amid clumps of firs on its northern side.

The Romans chose the site of their city well, in a truly pleasant district of heath and forest and fields; marking a point of great strategical importance. But all the same the traveller should come to Silchester in spring or summer-time for both in autumn and winter it can be desolate indeed. Here lived the Romans at a place they named Calleva Atrebatum. In the eighteenth century antiquaries first turned

their attention to the ancient city which local tradition stated lay beneath the cornfields and green fields of this spot, and excavations were continued more or less irregularly until 1833, which year saw the discovery of the Baths near what had proved to be the south gate of the buried town. In 1864 further work was undertaken, and in 1890 regular work upon the site of the Roman city was started. Now gradually the city has been bit by bit laid bare, with the result that many treasures in the way of Roman pottery, ornaments, glass and tessellated pavements have been discovered and removed to the British Museum and other places. The method pursued is to make an accurate plan of everything that is disclosed by the excavations before the soil is replaced as a precaution against the destruction of the remains by exposure to the air and weather. Among the discoveries that have been made in the third section explored by the Silchester Excavation Association are a building which was most probably the public Inn of the time, and another installation of baths which stood near the Basilica. The latter has been described as "the most precious relic of Early Christian architecture now extant in the world." Certainly it can claim to be one of the oldest known in Europe.

One of the most charming points of view of this buried city is near the East Gate just where a fragment of the old flint and slab wall crops out above the grass grown mound. Here one may stand in delightful surroundings above the streets, and remains of houses representing the greatest civilization of the world at the time the foundations of the

latter were laid ; in spring and summer a spot made beautiful by herbage and wild flowers in profusion. The East Gate of the city is to-day used as an entrance to a farmyard, and in this particular portion one meets with most definite fragments of a city which was founded soon after Caesar conquered Britain.

Outside the north-east corner of the wall are the grassy mounds marking the seats of the ruined amphitheatre, which can be traced fairly easily by those who are in any way acquainted with Roman architecture and remains. The Forum lies in the centre of the city, and on this site have been discovered fragments of columns and capitals, showing that it must have been a building in character with the size and importance of the city which stood as a kind of hub to the roads running north and west from it, and linking it up to the east with London, and to the south with other Roman settlements. Through these grass grown streets, between grassy mounds, the turf of which when we last saw it was cropped close by sheep, must have trodden the Roman legions coming from the south, probably from Portchester, to push their conquering way northward until the conquerors met the Cumberland Hills, and marched to the site of Hadrian's Wall, and gazed across the river to the still wider and unknown northlands.

Silchester remains to-day by far the best relic of a Roman city in Britain, and one that has been very carefully and thoroughly examined during the last half century ; but we know little or nothing about it, and there is no history to tell

us of the life led in it other than can be deduced from records of other Roman cities. Within the ancient wall, partly hidden by trees, stands the church which ancient as it is—seven centuries old or more—yet seems strangely recent compared with the surroundings in which we find it. Mainly an Early English building, it has a very finely carved Perpendicular Chancel screen of oak, with figures of angels ; a number of stone coffins ; some early lancet windows, two piscinas ; two ambries ; and an ancient effigy of a lady near the south wall. Over the pulpit is a painted canopy or sounding board dating from the middle of the seventeenth century.

More than half the whole area of the city, the walls of which are rather more than a mile and a half in circumference, and are most perfect on the south side, has been explored. The chief discoveries have been of a domestic character ; for military remains and inscriptions have been rare. The children's toys in the museums at Reading and Strathfieldsaye are especially interesting as they serve to illustrate the very old saying that there is " nothing new under the sun," and that toys in Roman days, at least in general character, were very like many of the toys of the present age. Truly it may be said that Silchester remains as John Cunningham wrote :

" Inexorably calm, with silent pace,

Here Time has pass'd—what ruin marks his way !

Although there is a pleasant inn on Silchester Common where one can rest, and explore the villages of the Berkshire border east and west, most travellers make their way back southward to Basingstoke by way of Monks' Sherborne, one

of a group of villages known as the Sherbornes, with an ancient Norman church standing on a slope of a hill rising to the Roman camp at Woodgarston Farm, which forms the southward buttress of the Downs. There is a good deal of Norman work still remaining in the church, and it has a curious fifteenth century porch.

The valley in which Monks' Sherborne lies is well wooded and there are many picturesque old chalk-pits overgrown with wild clematis, brambles, white thorns and other trees, with, in early summer, patches of white and pink foxgloves, growing in the crevices. There is something very charming about these old and deserted chalk-pits, whose walls in summer-time give a wonderful range of colour from dazzling white and greys to the green of turf and lichen stains.

Monks' Sherborne itself straggles along the high road out of which runs a lane leading to Pamber with a shallow ford. The Pamber priory ruins are distant about two miles from the turning. Sir Gilbert Scott restored the chancel, and a portion of the central tower seventy years ago; and the building is now used as the parish church. There is a fine old yew said to be upwards of 600 years old, and possibly contemporary with the Abbey Church, which was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. John; and a finely carved wooden effigy which is thought to be that of the Norman founder is to be seen within the church. All the country round about the Sherbornes is delightful, for it is well wooded, with charming hedgerows and grass-bordered, tree-shadowed lanes; every-

where, in spring and summer, wild flowers abound, and in such varieties as to make this district a paradise for the botanist.

Sherborne St. John, a mile or two south of Monks' Sherborne, is worth the necessary detour to visit it by a by-lane



MONK SHERBORNE.

off the Basingstoke-Reading main road. The village takes its name from the St. John family. The church dates from the twelfth century or earlier, and in the south porch there

is a wooden sundial, and over the door an odd monument which entreats the reader ;

“ Of your cHerete pra
Y for the sovles of
James Spyre an Jane
his wyf which cavse
d this porch to be
mad at ther cost
the yere of our Lord 1533 ”

The church is chiefly in the Perpendicular style, but contains fragments of Norman work and a curious square font. In the north aisle there is a shelf of chained books consisting of Mr. Fox's " Martyrology " given by William Jackson, his sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Gardener, and Mr. Ebenezer Foreness, who at the time, about the last decade of the seventeenth century, was the rector of the church. The chief interest of the building is the Chantry Chapel founded by Sir Bernard Brocas ; who died in 1395, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. He left sufficient money—the sum of 40 marks—to build the chapel, and keep it in repair. In it are several fifteenth century-brasses to the family, and there is an interesting altar tomb with the effigy of an armed knight.

By turning northward for a mile one reaches the beautiful mansion known as " The Vine," since the days of Cromwell the family seat of the Chutes. It was originally built in the early sixteenth century, and was enlarged and altered by Inigo Jones and Webb. Horace Walpole wrote enthusiastically of the beautiful chapel, famous for its carved stalls,

stained glass windows which were taken from Boulogne when it was captured by Henry VIII in 1544, and its Italian tiles. Leland writes of The Vine that it was "one of the principal houses in goodly building in all Hampshire." The house to-day, which is a large two-storied building with wings at either end, and with the famous chapel beyond the eastern one, is very much as it was when the first Lord Sandys built it 400 years ago. It is a pity that Speaker Chute removed the original stone mullions to the windows and put in painted window sashes, as this innovation has spoiled the outward appearance of the house. Many famous people have been entertained here in the past, and it is a charming and very beautiful survival of domestic architecture. Walpole visited it during the time of John Chute, the great grandson of Challoner Chute, who was Speaker of the House of Commons during Richard Cromwell's short Protectorate, and he gives a vivid picture of the state of the roads in this portion of Hampshire in his day for he wrote, "I don't believe "The Vine" is within the verge of the rainbow," and added, "In October, you will find it a little difficult to persuade me to accompany you there on stilts." Thus he wrote to Montague, and at another time told a friend "no post but a dove can come from The Vine."

Nowadays one reaches the wonderful and ancient house by good roads, and lovely lanes where bloom the primroses in April and May, and blackthorn a month later. The whole countryside in this part of Hampshire is delightful, and well worth exploring by those who have the inclination and time to spare.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SELBORNE COUNTRY—THE MEON VILLAGES—SOUTH-EASTERN HAMPSHIRE.

IF one were asked after much wandering in Hampshire to particularize a feature of the county more outstanding than others one would, we fancy, be inclined to claim for it the distinction of its many delightful and picturesque villages and hamlets. Indeed, travellers who leave the most frequented main roads are sure to find treasure trove of this kind along the many by-roads and lanes with which the county is covered. Though there are so many villages which claim the palm for beauty and picturesqueness—notably South Wansborough, north of Alton ; delightful Twyford, a few miles south of St. Cross in the Itchen Valley ; Hurstbourne Tarrant, north of Andover in the pretty little valley of the Bourne ; and, hidden away among the hilly country of North Hants, Freefolk and Long Parish ; and pretty Itchen Abbas, set amid elms and alders on the banks of the Test—by many the palm is awarded to that beautiful village Selborne upon which Gilbert White by his writings conferred immortality. Notwithstanding its comparative remoteness, it is visited yearly by large numbers of people—among them many Americans—because they desire to see the actual place which Gilbert White made world famous. There are several ways of reaching Selborne. The most usual is from Alton, and the five miles or so that separate it from that little market

town, though through a country beautifully open and pleasant, are not particularly interesting until one comes within sight of the great Hanger and Nore Hill.

Selborne seen from the Hanger is almost lost to view, and it is at first difficult to pick out with distinctness anything save the church tower, and a house or cottage here and there. One is often asked which is the best season of the year in which to visit Selborne. Spring and summer are both good ; the former because of the wonderfully delicate tints, and the songs of the birds that Gilbert White loved ; and the latter because it is so pleasant in the hot days of August to get into a place of woods, and shade to temper vivid sunshine. But autumn also has its claim, because, in fine weather, those who go to Selborne are not likely soon to forget the wonderful blaze of colour, and the amazing beauty of the woods. Selborne is a place of beeches, and when one sees the beeches here, shapely and gracious in their outline, one is not at a loss to understand that White should have called them the most beautiful of all trees.

One cannot do better than quote Gilbert White's own description of the village and its surroundings. He says : The high part of the south-west consists of a vast hill of chalk, rising three hundred feet above the village, and is divided into a sheep-down and a long hanging wood, called the Hanger. . . . The Down, or sheep-walk, is a pleasing park-like spot, of about one mile by half that space, jutting out on the verge of the hill-country, where it begins to break down into the plains, and commanding a very engaging view, being an

assemblage of hill, dale, woodlands, heath and water. The prospect is bounded to the south-east and east by the vast range of mountains called the Sussex Downs, by Guild-down near Guildford, and by the Downs round Dorking, and Ryegate in Surrey, to the north-east, which altogether, with the country beyond Alton and Farnham, form a noble and extensive outline.

At the foot of this hill, one stage or step from the uplands, lies the village, which consists of one single straggling street, three-quarters of a mile in length, in a sheltered vale, and running parallel with the Hanger. . . .

At each end of the village, which runs from south-east to north-west, arises a small rivulet: that at the north-west end frequently fails: but the other is a fine perennial spring, little influenced by drought or wet seasons, called Well-head.

Luckily for Gilbert White enthusiasts the passing years have made little change in the main and natural features of Selborne, the Hanger, Nore Hill, the beautiful common, and the two trout streams, one of which ultimately falls into the North Sea by way of the Thames, and the other into the Channel by way of the Arun, and all those deep sunken roads by which Charles Kingsley was so intrigued are very much as they were when Gilbert White was alive. The village itself has altered a little, for some red brick, box-like cottages have been built in the main street, and the old village shop, with its tiny windows crammed with bottles of sweets, bootlaces, corn cures, toys, sticks of liquorice, and odds and ends of all kinds, has disappeared and given



SELBOURNE "HANGER" FROM ABOVE ALTON

place to a modern "store," which has none of the picturesque-ness of the old, if it can claim greater efficiency of service, and more variety in its goods.

The church, too, has been a good deal altered since Gilbert White's day; but the wonderful old yew which he stated was "upwards of 23 feet in the girth, supporting a head of suitable extent to its bulk," is still standing. It has grown since Gilbert White wrote these words, for, in perfect health and vigour, it has reached a girth of $25\frac{1}{2}$ feet, taken four feet from the ground. And the "head of suitable extent to its bulk" now measures as many yards. Almost opposite the churchyard and the village green stands Gilbert White's house known as "The Wakes." Though there have of late years been considerable additions to the house there still remains much that can be called White's, and in the hall are to be seen—as seems so fitting, indeed—cases of birds. At the back of the house is a beautifully kept lawn and garden in which the naturalist was wont often to work. The old summer-house has entirely disappeared, but the sundial remains, and in the meadow just beyond the lawn there stands an old oak which it is said is the one where White stood and watched the night-jar pursuing the fern-chafers. There is a delightful stretch of meadows between the garden and the Hanger, and it was no doubt in these that White spent many hours studying bird life. Some at least of the birds of which he made a study have become extinct in Selborne; among them certainly the honey buzzard, which once nested in a tall beech in the Hanger, and the

ravens, which were found in the eighteenth century in this neighbourhood.

It is the soil of this particular district that to a large extent makes Selborne so charming, and its scenery so varied. Here we have chalk and gault, the upper and lower green sand series, and the chloritic marl, and the result is a much more broken country-side than is found among the great chalk downs, or in the chalk valleys, and also a greater variety of floral and vegetable life. Another feature of Selborne is its hollow lanes. There are two principal lanes of this character, the one leading eastward towards Woolmer Forest, and the other running northward towards Alton. There is another such road in the north-east of Hampshire which is so deeply sunk as to appear as though made like a railway cutting.

The visitor to Selborne will not be slow to recognize that the "Invitation" which Gilbert White wrote is fully justified. Undoubtedly the best view of the place is obtained from the Hanger, of which it entails a steep climb yet amply rewards the climber on reaching the summit by the beauty and extent of the view. The vista between the trees is not easily beaten in Hampshire. One sees the church tower and just here and there an indication of some houses embosomed in the trees and, indeed, almost lost among them, where the village stands "in a sheltered spot, secured by the Hanger from the strong westerly winds." Although the Pond in Woolmer Forest of White's day has almost disappeared, there remain two out of the three lakes by the road near Oakhanger which

at evening are picturesque, especially the upper one with its small islet and clump of trees.

Gilbert White came of a family which had been connected with Selborne for two generations before his own. The grandfather of the naturalist also a Gilbert was given the



The Wakes
Selborne.

"THE WAKES," SELBORNE.

living of Selborne in 1681, and his tomb is to be seen in the church. When he died in 1727 he left one son, John White, the father of Gilbert, the latter of whom was born at Selborne in the Vicarage, in 1720. He was educated at Basingstoke Grammar School, and in 1739 he matriculated at Oriel College. In 1744 he became a Fellow of his College, and afterwards

was a curate at Swarraton near Alresford. In 1755 he settled for good at The Wakes, Selborne, and for twenty-four years filled the office of curate of Farrington, a mile or two away. He declined several College livings, preferring to spend his time of leisure in his native village. In the life and letters of his uncle, his nephew, R. Holt-White, writes, "Thus his days passed tranquil and serene, with scarcely any other vicissitudes than those of the seasons, till they closed at a mature age on June 26th, 1793."

In White's "Antiquities of Selborne" reference is made to the Priory, which was founded by Peter de la Roche in Henry III's reign, only small remnants of which—a few tiles and some scraps of masonry—are still to be seen in the garden of the Priory farmhouse just outside the village, in the thickly wooded Lithe. The site of the fishponds can still be traced by the curious. These stews, as they were called, or ponds were necessities to the Priories or Monasteries, and often the latter possessed their own mills where the monks ground their corn. No doubt the Selborne Priory Mill stood in the Mill field now devoted to hops.

Selborne Church is not of any great antiquity, though it has some ancient fragments incorporated in it. It mostly dates from Tudor times. There are several memorials in it of the White family; but the only one of real interest is that to the naturalist himself, described as "Fifty years Fellow of Oriel College in Oxford, and Historian of this, his native, Parish." The headstone to his grave is in the churchyard, and bears the brief inscription "G. W. 26 June 1793."

The wanderer in this part of Hants will be well advised to make his way, as we did, to Petersfield towards the Sussex border, through pretty Empshott, standing at the source of the Rother with its small Early English church, ancient rood screen, font and curious oak-glazed belfry. Just round here, at Priors Dean, Colemore and East Tistead, are churches which are well worth going a little out of the way to see, and from Empshott, at the foot of its steep hill down which the road winds from Selborne with the trees arched overhead forming in summer a delightful green tunnel, no one should fail to go to Hawkley where there is a Hanger like that at Selborne. William Cobbett has given a description of this which cannot be excelled. He writes in "Rural Rides," "Out we came all in a moment at the very edge of the Hanger ! And never in all my life was I so surprised and so delighted. I pulled up my horse, and sat and looked, and it was like looking from the top of a Castle down into the sea, except that the valley was land and not water." The view from the Hanger is, indeed, fine and, quite as beautiful in its way as that from Selborne.

Woolmer Forest lies northward and is a very different place to what it was in Gilbert White's day. Then it was almost treeless, and little deserved the term of forest ; but many years ago was planted with larches and Scotch and other firs, and now has become well-wooded, as the trees have flourished. The district is quite distinctive and unlike any other in Hampshire except that round Eversley. Hereabouts one has a region of bracken and sedge. Sand, with

boggy places in which the silvery white cotton grass flourishes, and where in summer there are great stretches of wonderful purple heather set amid the deep green pines.

Centuries ago Woolmer must have been a great forest, and even more desolate than to-day because, we are told, that it was once the haunt of the wild boar, the wolf and the heron ; and as late as the days of Queen Anne the red deer were found in it. Once the Queen, reclining on a bank at a point about half a mile to the east of Woolmer Pond and still known as Queen's Bank, saw a drove of deer, which came out of the great road at Liphook, driven in by the keepers along the vale.

The main high road from Liss, a mile and a half eastward of Hawkley Hanger, takes one speedily to Petersfield with Rake Hanger right on the very borders of Sussex. Years ago all the way from Liphook to Petersfield was wild forest, and the haunt of all sorts of desperate characters, and Rake Common was a place to be avoided by travellers unless they had nothing to lose, or were well-armed and in good company.

Along this road in 1748 took place one of the many brutal crimes of which the Sussex and Hampshire smugglers were guilty at that period. The smugglers seized a " Preventive officer," William Calley, and a man by the name of Chayter or Chater, who had given evidence against them, in an inn at Rowlands Castle, and carried them off. The story is told in full in " Smuggling and Smugglers in Sussex." Both the " Preventive " officer and his companion were brutally

murdered ; one by being whipped along the road till he died, and the other by being thrown into a well at Rake after having been chained up in a fuel shed for three days. One of the party of smugglers turned King's Evidence ; the rest were tried at East Grinstead in March, 1748, and one at least was hanged on a gibbet near the scene of their crime.

Those wanderers on the eastern border of Hampshire, for whom an ancient inn very famous and much frequented by celebrities in the past has an appeal, will make their way to the pleasant village of Liphook and its "Anchor." It has been much written about, for one may find a description as far back as Pepys, as well as in the pages of that other author of whom Hampshire should be proud, Charles Dickens. In mediæval times, and during the seventeenth and eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth century, it was, indeed, a lively spot, for one is told that as many as twenty-six coaches would pass it daily in the early years of the last century. In bygone days the "Anchor" entertained and afforded shelter to several Royal travellers. William IV often broke his journey there on his way to and from Portsmouth, and the Allied Sovereigns and their generals lunched at the inn in June, 1915, on their way to the great Portsmouth meeting, Blucher being one of the company. Later both Queen Charlotte and the Duchess of Kent with her little daughter, the Princess Victoria, stayed there several times. To-day its historic, windowed parlour is frequented by many motorists, and the great chestnut tree which stands in front under the shade of which in summer the coaches used to draw

up is still one of the best known landmarks on the Guildford to Portsmouth road.

All around about Liphook, too, the scenery is so charming that a Hampshire writer, the Rev. G. W. Godwin, in "The Green Lanes of Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex" calls it "a little bit of Switzerland in Hampshire." This description may be somewhat flattering, but there is no doubt that the glimpses that one gets of quiet homesteads nestling in little green villages and crowning hill-tops in the background, with the peacefulness broken only by the lowing of the cattle and tinkling of the sheep bells, in some measure justifies the parallel.

One is in the hop country again when one reaches Petersfield, which was originally a chaplery of Old Buriton, a tiny village hiding itself away two miles or so south beyond War Down just at a point where Head Down juts out into the valley. In the red brick manor-house near the church Edward Gibbon, the historian, lived for many years. His father was Member for Petersfield, and his son was an officer in the county Militia before he devoted himself to literature. Another Hampshire writer and scholar, who was born, as well as lived, at Buriton was Bishop Robert Lowth, the Hebrew scholar, who wrote many works—among them the life of William of Wykeham.

Petersfield is an ancient borough indeed, for it was granted in 1108 by William, Earl of Gloucester, Lord of the Manor, the rights and liberties enjoyed by the city of Winchester. In bygone times a great coaching centre, and to some extent

prosperous by reason of wool manufacture, Petersfield to-day has undergone considerable alteration from those far-off times, and though possessing some quaint survivals and some old and picturesque houses in The Spain, with charming diamond-paned windows and mellowed roofs and brickwork ;



MARKET SQUARE, PETERSFIELD.

is less interesting as a town than as forming an excellent centre from which to explore the beauties of Eastern Hampshire. But though the church has been restored it has a good Norman arch, some Early English windows and a few interesting monuments. Round the Market Square, too, are some good old timber-framed houses, and in it there is

a statue of William of Orange upon a prancing horse given by one of the borough members, William Joliffe by name, in 1724.

Petersfield, like many other Hampshire and Sussex towns, has changed its character from what are known as the "good old days." It was once the centre of a flourishing iron trade with great smelting works before the neighbouring forest disappeared. Now it has become almost entirely dependent for its prosperity on agriculture and farming. The district round about is very hilly, as all motorists and cyclists, leaving out of the question pedestrians, will soon discover, and although punctures may be frequent because of the sharpness of the flints and walks for cyclists many, because of the steepness of the gradients, there are few portions of the county where more varied, wilder, or more interesting scenery is to be found.

We are in the land of the Meons, East Meon lying in the centre of a district which is bounded on the north by the Petersfield to Winchester high road, and the range of hills which forms the connecting link between Great Oxenbourne Down on the east and Stoke Down on the west ; while West Meon and Meonstoke, nestling under Stoke Down, are almost equidistant the one from the other. Here one steps into what is known as the Meonwaras country, a land of sleepy villages, old churches, mills and water meadows, through which runs a delightful and sparkling trout stream -the Arle or Meon -beside which Izaak Walton spent much time in his later years, and every village of which has an ancient

church full of interest for the student of architecture, and the lover of the quietly beautiful.

Here is a picture of the district :

“ Green and sunny meadows surround the quiet villages. Farmhouses with the weather tinting of centuries, look out from between clumps of trees as ancient as themselves. Great walnut trees abound, and as the ground rises towards the open Downs it is here and there dotted with white thorns, so large and so venerable as to become fit gathering places for the small people with whom such thorns are held to be special favourites. Mill-wheels give life to the stream. Sometimes a weir breaks into foam, or a mossy old bridge crosses it. Trout darting among the weeds or lying hovering in the deeper pools, and quaint old church towers rising above the village roofs form subjects for many a picture, not the less attractive in these busy-paced times because every turn of it suggests the quietness of an old sleepy hollow.”

West Meon is a pretty little village, the church of which has been rebuilt but still has some good glass and oak carving, and Westbury Park close by contains the ruins of a thirteenth-century chapel in which there is a good Knight's tomb.

Meonstoke, which is the most southerly of the Meon villages, stands by the river on rising ground, and William of Wykeham is said to have assisted in the building of the church, especially in the tracery and niches at the end of the chancel, and his “ rose ” appears in the moulding of the latter. The alternating octagon and circular pillars in the nave, and the late Norman font of black Purbeck Marble

should not be overlooked. On Winchester Hill, which towers above the picturesque village, are the remains of a Roman camp in which during excavations coins and pottery have been found.

*East Meon. -*

EAST MEON.

Many of the houses in Meonstoke are very old, built of brick, and with lichen-stained tiled roofs, or picturesque brown thatch.

There is a record that in 1441 after a great tempest "there fell a great multitude of rats" into the malt room of the Vicarage, and during the ensuing rat hunt treasure was found in the shape of four gold nobles and twenty pounds in gold.

The Crown claimed it, as Thomas Wassaille, the vicar, was ignorant of the origin of the treasure. But King Henry VI wrote to the Chancellor ordering that Wassaille should be permitted to keep what he had found, because "he had suffered great loss owing to five houses belonging to him having been blown down by the storm."

There is the old Register in the church with entries copied



PETERSFIELD DISTRICT.

into it from 1559 until 1678, the period at which the actual Register begins. One is a curious entry, always pointed out, dated December 10, 1778, which tells how one Eliza Erwaker was buried on that day, and how she had fallen "dead on appealing to God in confirmation of a lie." In the church porch there is an altar tomb with a moveable top, and in this it is said kegs of spirit used to be hidden in the old days by smugglers, who came from the coast round about Portsmouth and Chichester.

East Meon is delightfully situated in the winding chalk

valley, and has a church which retains much of the original Norman and Early English building first erected by Bishop Walkelin. The tower, the doorway, and the curiously carved font similar to that in Winchester Cathedral are the chief features, although a stone in the floor of the south transept with the mysterious inscription "Amens Plenty" never fails to arouse the curiosity of visitors. The church is thought by some to be the finest village church in the county, and to be contemporary with Winchester Cathedral. The font, which is of great age, is cut from a block of slate, on one side of which is depicted the Creation and the Temptation of Adam and Eve, and the other the Expulsion from Paradise and an Angel teaching Adam to dig and Eve to spin.

Quite near the church is the old twelfth-century Court House in which the Diocesan Courts were formerly held ; a picturesque creeper-clad building with a delightful red brown tiled roof and charming windows.

One can go across country to Bishop's Waltham by way of Corhampton, and at the back of the range of hills which stretch from Doxford to the former place, and very charming the country-side is by the by-lanes which must be taken. One crosses the Meon to reach Corhampton, which is known to cricketers as the home of one of the most prominent members of the Old Hambledon Club, by name James Aylward, who when playing against All England in 1777 made a record score of 167. The Saxon church is very ancient, there seems little doubt as to its origin, and the ornamented square stone in the south wall is most likely a sundial. The building is



MEONSTOKE

of old flint rubble, and the walls have grey stone quoins and projecting stone ribs. There is a curious old stone chair near the altar; and the round font, with cable mouldings and the chancel arch are probably a thousand years old. The building has been carefully restored, and is kept in beautiful order. The simple interior cannot fail to charm the visitor. There is a trite and pointed epitaph to William Wilson which is dated 1694, and runs as follows:

“ Both Old and Yong
Make Ready for ye Day
For When Death comes
then None Can Stay.”

The little church, somewhat isolated, set amid trees, and approached at the time of our visit by a road in none too good condition, possesses a yew tree said to be a thousand years old, which must be one of the largest in the county with a girth of about 26 feet.

Through twisting and leafy lanes the way leads to Bishop's Waltham on the Winchester to Portsmouth road. There is nothing particularly picturesque about the town, although it is of so ancient a foundation that it is mentioned in Domesday Book, and here Henry II held a Council in 1182, and Richard Coeur de Lion was once entertained by the townsfolk. At least no idea of its real antiquity can be gathered from the modern houses near the railway station. But a glimpse is caught of an ivy-covered stone ruin on the eastern side of the railway, and near a big pond, weedy and rush bordered, there is the old townlet quaint and peaceful with

still many low, thatched cottages, and houses in its narrow streets, and a small Square, which was busier in coaching days than it has been of recent years. An indication of the ancient prosperity of the little town is found in a reference to the rivalry which had arisen between it and Winchester,



WEST MEON.

for the market is referred to as one existing "to the great prejudice of the citie"—that is, Winchester.

There are quite a number of roads branching from Bishop's Waltham, and probably this had a good deal to do with the prosperity that it formerly enjoyed.

All that remains of the great Palace that Henry de Blois

built here for the Bishops of Winchester is the tower, portions of walls, part of the Refectory and a few windows of the Great Hall. The building owes its ruin to the Parliamentarians, who besieged it and took it when it was held for the King, and left it despoiled. Although it was given back to the See of Winchester at the Restoration, it was never used again as a Palace, and was allowed to fall into ruin. Long before Henry II dismantled it, soon after it was built, just as he did also the other strongholds of the Bishops of Winchester, Wolvesley and Merdon. William of Wykeham rebuilt and enlarged it, making it rather more of a Palace than a Castle. He was not only a builder of churches, but had something to do also with Windsor Castle, and Queenborough Castle in Kent.

Of William of Wykeham's church, or rather the building that stood here in his day, very little remains, although it is possible the Perpendicular chancel may date from about that time. During the French Wars Portsmouth and neighbouring towns were all used for the purpose of accommodating the many French prisoners who were taken by sea or land. Bishop's Waltham was near enough the great seaport to have its share, and there are some memories surviving in the little town of the French prisoners who were quartered in it. In some of the cottage parlours—at any rate a few years ago—were to be found little articles made of bone, such as models of ships and cottages, and sets of chess-men, which had been fashioned by the prisoners in their monotonous leisure.

Southward to Fareham, and thence to Portsmouth, the

latter a modern town, with but comparatively little in its buildings of to-day of antiquarian interest which need not detain the wayfarer long, but which, because of its history is interesting.

One's journeying done these remain fragrant and unforgettable memories of this lovely country-side, historic towns, charming villages, exquisite lanes, wide open commons, yellow with gorse, expanses of moorland purple with heather, wind-kissed, steel-grey pools, in which clouds glass themselves. In a word a beautiful and typical part of this dear land, this England.

CHAPTER X.

PORTSMOUTH AND ITS ROMANCE—A GREAT CASTLE—"THE RUINS OF PARADISE"—"THE LIVERPOOL OF THE SOUTH."

PORTSMOUTH is best approached by a road skirting Waltham Chase, formerly famous for its deer and deer poachers, who were called the "Waltham Blacks," and were referred to by Gilbert White in his "Antiquities of Selborne." From Fareham the country soon becomes much flatter, and in great contrast to that which we have recently been passing through. As one comes to Gosport, and its famous Hard one suddenly enters, as it were, into a new phase of Hampshire altogether. Before the traveller lies a great harbour stretching inland to a depth of some three miles, and just across the ferry is the greatest Naval Station in the world, with traditions going back for centuries although little of old Portsmouth survives to-day.

Only the great range of Portsdown Hills, grey-green and desolate looking ridges, with an almost unbroken summit line crowned and pierced by many suspected and unsuspected forts, serves to break the flatness and monotony of this particular strip of coast.

If one comes to Portsmouth, as we have sometimes done, at the close of a summer's day the great harbour, and the flat and uninteresting town takes on an element of picturesqueness and even beauty which has in the past tempted artists to paint what would otherwise not be very paintable. Viewed

from the heights of the Portsdown Hills the serried rows of houses of the "Service" folk are easily recognized, pleasant villas, and semi-detached residences which almost encircle the matting-like area of Southsea Common, with vistas of closely built blue-grey roofs of working-class dwellings, and the huge roof spans of the building and fitting sheds of the dockyard; with here and there the steel masts of battleships, or some giant crane breaking the skyline.

There is no busier harbour on the South coast than Portsmouth, for in it business and pleasure, war and peace are indissolubly linked. On the eastern shore lie the naval dockyard, the steamboat stages, and most of what commerce comes into the Harbour; on the western chiefly construction sheds, slipways, fitting out yards, and industries connected with the yachting, and the yachts which, during the summer months, add such life and beauty to the Solent and home waters generally.

The harbour simply teems with life, not a moment passes throughout the hours of daylight without some craft or other—whether battleship, cruiser, torpedo boat, destroyer, submarine, or excursion steamer, yacht or trading schooner, barque, brigantine or rust red collier—entering or leaving it through the narrow jaws between Blockhouse Fort and Point Battery. A French writer has said, "It is the one spot I have seen in England that impressed me with the tireless activity, and sense of the Nation's naval greatness." And after a few days spent in and about the harbour one realizes the truth of this statement.

Gosport, a quaint, old-fashioned town which Leland describes as "bare and little occupied in time of peace," has of late years been slowly but surely absorbed by the Government needs. It derived its name, it is supposed, from the words "God's Port," or the port of safety or deliverance—a description bestowed upon it in gratitude by Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester, when he landed there A.D. 1158, after a perilous voyage from the coast of France. Actually it would appear to be more probable that the name is derived from Gorseport, or the Haven among the Gorse, with which most of the dry land in the neighbourhood was formerly covered.

One of the most remarkable features connected with Portsmouth Harbour is the number of villages which grew up upon its shores with the name of which the word "port" became incorporated.

Portsea Island, would but for a narrow channel or waterway be a peninsula and has been for centuries an interesting and important portion of the district now generally known as Portsmouth.

In ancient times its shores were marshy and muddy, rendering a landing difficult, and even the Romans appear not to have invaded Portsea Island, for there are no relics of their occupation discoverable upon it, although Portchester, at the head of the harbour, was the *Portus Magnus* of the Romans, which lost its ancient importance as did several other towns along the South coast, Rye and Sandwich for example, by reason of the retreat of the sea, which caused

the necessity for the port to be moved to the deep water at the entrance of the harbour.

There is truly a smack of the sea about the name of Portsmouth with its crowded memories of the past. It is probable that the Danes harried it on several occasions when they sailed into the Solent, and it is equally probable that it was here some at least of the galleys with which Alfred the Great formed the nucleus of the English Navy were built, and that they sallied forth through the narrow harbour mouth to inflict the crushing defeat upon the marauders in the Solent, which constituted one of the most famous of the many important naval engagements that Alfred fought and won.

It was near Portsmouth, too, that Harold II's fleet, two centuries later, cruised aimlessly about for some time ere sailing eastward with the object of preventing the landing of William of Normandy which took place further along the coast, and it was here, in 1139, that Matilda, daughter of Henry I, landed with a handful of knights and a few serving men, to attempt to win the English throne, and Portsmouth was also the place of departure for Richard Coeur de Lion on his final expedition to the Holy Land. Indeed, almost every foot of ground upon which the older portion of the town now stands is associated with historical events, and memories of the English Navy of the past, which from the dim ages, when Portsmouth began to take shape, has been ever great, upon the narrow and wider seas, for save a short period in the reign of that pleasure-loving monarch, Charles II, when the Dutch swept the Channel.

As one walks its streets memories come of the innumerable gallant men—many unsung in ballad and unrecorded in the pages of history, though deserving such honour—who during the past centuries have set forth boldly upon enterprises for the founding of Britain's Empire of the sea, and the maintenance of her honour and glory afloat.

There is the Hard. Who that has read Marryat's "Peter Simple" does not know it, and cannot in his mind's eye conjure up the picture of the famous place with the pig-tailed "salts" who frequented it in the days of Nelson, Howe and Rodney? Mudie in his "History of Hampshire," to which we are indebted for some historical information, though doing scant justice to the interest and story of Portsmouth, gives a fairly vivid sketch of the famous Hard about this period. He writes; "Immediately beyond the gun wharves there is an opening, with the buildings of Portsea on the other side. This is the Common Hard, and it and the rows of houses opposite are much devoted to the sale of frippery, so that this is neither the most cleanly nor the most moral spot in England. . . . It is the great landing place from the ships in the harbour—at least, for the common sailors, and those who keep up intercourse with them—this Common Hard displays no very pleasant scene in times of peace; in war time it must be far worse."

It was on what is now known as Southsea Common, the resort of nursemaids and children when not used for drill, that Edward III in the summer of 1346 gathered together the army of knights and fighting men, and good bowmen,

upwards of 30,000 strong, which crossed the Channel, and shortly afterwards won him the Battle of Crecy against a French army four times the number. It is interesting to remember that among the 30,000 French who are said to have been slain was the King of Bohemia, whose crest and motto—three ostrich plumes and “Ich Dien”—the Prince of Wales



Douglas Snowden.

Place House
Titchfield

PLACE HOUSE, TITCHFIELD.

afterwards adopted. At Portsmouth, too, in some later times assembled the armies of John of Gaunt and of Edward IV, on their way to take part in the interminable French Wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Southsea Castle, which owes its origin, as do several other similar fortresses along the South coast, to Henry VIII, was already in existence when Leland came to Ports-

mouth and referred to it as "a ryghte goodlye and warlyke castill." Here Leland's spelling varies from that he uses when describing other castles. But spelling in those days was not often an author's strong point. The Castle, to which Henry paid several visits, was probably built about 1540. In 1626 it was partially destroyed by fire ; and again, in 1759, when some soldiers were filling cartridges by the aid, it is supposed, of a " naked " light, and the open powder barrels exploded with the result that the Castle was almost demolished. It was, however, once more rebuilt, and afterwards used as a prison.

The history of Portsmouth and its harbour has not always been creditable. There have been mutinies, treasonable firing of the dockyard, and even assassinations in its streets, stirring the inhabitants to the core, and leading at the time to much excitement and turbulence.

The most tragic event in the town's history was the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham on the bright summer morning of August 23rd, 1628, whilst he was at Portsmouth engaged in gathering together a second force for the relief of La Rochelle, then besieged by Cardinal Richelieu.

The house in the High Street, in which the Duke was fatally stabbed by the fanatic, John Felton, although much altered is still standing. It is near the end of the historic thoroughfare, and has a tablet on the wall—similar to those affixed to other historical sites in the borough—commemorating the event.

Buckingham and his wife and sister were the guests of Captain John Mason, who afterwards became famous as the founder of the town of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, U.S.A. The assassin, Felton, who was a Lieutenant in a Foot Regiment, imagined he had a grievance because he had been overlooked for promotion. He gained entrance to the Duke's temporary residence, and finding him standing in the hall, as he was about to start to visit the King at Southwick, he stabbed him. So swift and silent was the blow that for some moments no one recognized the murderer. Then amid great confusion, and the piercing shrieks of the Duchess and her maid, Felton stepped forward and acknowledged the crime. He was seized, and for the time protected, and ultimately taken to London for trial. He was condemned, executed at Tyburn on November 26th, 1628, and his dead body hung in chains on Southsea Beach as a warning. An obelisk close to the Clarence Pier to-day marks the site of the gibbet where Felton hung. He must have been a man of resource and considerable daring, for when he was threatened with the rack by the Earl of Dorset, if he did not disclose the names of his supposed accomplices, he successfully escaped the torture by declaring that if put to it the first name he would mention would be that of the Earl of Dorset himself.

A little farther down the street is another historic house, No. 47, once the home of Admiral Anson afterwards Baron Anson of Soberton. Other celebrities of Portsmouth of the past who must not be overlooked are John Pounds, the originator of Ragged Schools who was a cobbler (1776-1839) ;

Janos Hanway (1712-1786) an author, philanthropist and traveller, who was also a public benefactor to seafaring folk, whose name is remembered in connection with the Marine Society and Magdalene Hospital. But perhaps when all his good works for sailors, and the promotion of Sunday Schools are forgotten he may be remembered as the introducer of the umbrella to England, and as the first man to walk the streets of London with one.

Naturally the dockyard has seen some narrow escapes of destruction from fire, the most famous being in 1776 when one James Aitken, known as "Jack the Painter," set alight one of the sheds, but apparently without doing much damage. Arson in those days, and in fact until the middle of last century, was a capital offence, and Aitken was condemned, and duly hanged by being strung up to the mast-head of the "Arethusa" 60 feet in the air, and was afterwards hung in chains near Blockhouse Point. A lurid sidelight upon the manners and morals of that period is afforded by the circumstance that the skeleton was ultimately stolen by some sailors and pledged in satisfaction of a drink bill at one of the Gosport inns.

Of these ancient inns the "Blue Posts," which Marryat describes in "Peter Simple," alas, no longer stands, as it was burnt down some half-century ago. But there is still a "Blue Posts" in Broad Street. On one of the windows of the old house was scratched the following poetic effort, possibly by some midshipman of Nelson's day :

“ This is the Blue Postesses,
Where the midshipmen leave their Chestesses,
Call for tea and toastesses,
And alas ! forget to pay for their breakfastesses.”

The famous Star and Garter Inn is fortunately still standing near the Point or Floating Bridge. Here in the cosy bar parlour, which seems redolent of old days, one can sit and smoke at the same table round which Nelson, Howe, Rodney and other “ old sea dogs ” used to foregather, gossiping, possibly discussing plans of campaign, and smoking long old-time churchwardens.

Among the many other famous visitors to the inn in former days were Louis Philippe, on his flight into exile ; Sir John Franklin ; and King William IV, known as the “ Sailor King,” who when Prince of Wales often occupied a bedroom which is still shown. In the coffee room is a curious survival—a huge cupboard or secret chamber measuring about 10 feet by 6 feet. Tradition asserts that this was used as a hiding-place from the Press Gang ; or possibly, which seems even more likely, was a “ hole ” used by smugglers. The “ Star and Garter ” remains a fine relic of old Portsmouth, and one of the most interesting survivals of former days. The famous Lord Howe’s house still stands in Highbury Street, and the little shop of John Pounds is in the same thoroughfare, and may be discovered by the curious. The George Inn, in the High Street, still has the room where Nelson breakfasted the last morning he spent in England. Sir Walter Scott spent a week in Portsmouth in 1831, but unfortunately for the

pilgrim to literary shrines Lockhart does not record where he stayed.

Charles Dickens, Hampshire's greatest novelist, was born at No. 387, Commercial Road, Landport, in a small house on the west side of that thoroughfare. It is now devoted to the purposes of a Dickens' Museum, but the future novelist did not live here long, as his father, a pay clerk in the Navy, was thrown out of employment at the time of a wholesale reduction of the staff, and as a consequence the family, fallen upon evil times, removed first to Chatham, and then to London, where, as all the world knows, Charles earned a few shillings a week by pasting labels on blacking bottles. In only one of Dickens' books, "Nicholas Nickleby," does the novelist make use of the town of his birth. In the book we have named, Nicholas, when in search of a fortune, met the Crummles party "at a roadside inn, yet twelve miles short of Portsmouth." He rode to the latter town in the Crummles' conveyance, a four-wheeled phaeton, as Dickens put it, behind the "strange four legged animal" that "took his time upon the road." Here he appeared with Snevellicci, and at the end of the play shared the applause. About this time there was a local comedian named Johnny Floyer, who was so popular that he enjoyed two benefits every year. And we are told by one authority the servant girls when entering a place always bargained for holidays on the occasions of Floyer's benefit. The actor is said to have been the original Charles Dickens' Folair, one of the characters in "Nicholas Nickleby." Another great novelist and poet—one of the

giants of the Victorian era—George Meredith, the author of “Evan Harrington,” “Richard Feverel” and half a score of other novels, was born at 73, High Street, February 12th, 1828, and of him, too, his native town and, indeed, Hampshire may well be proud.

At Portsea was born another novelist and writer who became the modern historian of London, Sir Walter Besant ; and in his autobiography are recorded memories of his youth in Portsmouth. He made considerable use in his novels of his birthplace, and it appears in “By Celia’s Arbour” and “The Orange Girl.”

For those who have time to spare there is much of interest in this great port, and old-time fragments of its historic and ancient buildings are to be discovered by the curious in out-of-the-way corners. Fortunately most of the houses of any historical interest have tablets affixed to them, which helps the wayfarer in his identification.

There is a bust of Charles I on the King’s Bastion, which was erected, we are told, at a cost of £50, and the bill for which is preserved at the British Museum. For many years it was thought to be of bronze, but was eventually discovered to be of lead. Of all the old gates only the Landport Gate survives ; the others have been one by one removed.

The most interesting ecclesiastical building in Portsmouth at any rate to seafarers is the Garrison Church, which was once the *Domus Dei* or Hospital of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of seamen. It is one of the few survivals of the ancient

hospitals, once so numerous in the South of England, at which all who came to them could reckon upon receiving hospitality and assistance. It was founded in the early part of the thirteenth century by Peter des Roches, a crusading Bishop of Winchester, and it was afterwards richly endowed by King John and his successors. At the Dissolution of the Religious Houses its revenues were worth, in the money of to-day, upwards of £1000 per annum, but with its suppression the charity as well as the buildings themselves suffered ruin. The church was for a time used as a storehouse, and although in the reign of Queen Elizabeth something was done to repair the buildings the amount of restoration was inconsiderable. In Stuart times, however, and for a period of two centuries after the Dissolution the Hospital was known as "The King's House," and the Deputy Governor of the town lived here with his suite. It was in this house Katherine of Braganza, who landed at the old Sally Port at Portsmouth, on coming to England to marry Charles II in 1662, lodged. And in the Domus Dei the private celebration of their marriage took place; followed a few days later by a public celebration in the Governor's house.

The church of Domus Dei contains many very interesting memorials in the shape of windows and stalls, and articles of ecclesiastical furniture. The fine groined roof dates from the thirteenth century, and is a part of the original building. It is interesting to note that it was to the Domus Dei some of the captains, and six Spaniards out of the Armada ships, as well as some of Drake's wounded seamen, were brought—

this being the last occasion for which the building was used for its original purpose.

The other church of any note, St. Thomas's, more picturesque when seen across the water from the Camber than from the High Street, in which it stands, is of thirteenth century foundation ; but the present building with its low, crenellated and domed tower dates almost entirely from the seventeenth century. Prior to the reign of Charles I it had been used as a storehouse. In the chancel is the monument of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and in the Register of the church the entry of Charles II's marriage.

The best manner of approaching Portchester Castle, if one wishes to realize its great picturesqueness and strong situation, is up the harbour, which was the way we ourselves came to it last on a summer's day. Long before Portsmouth had any existence Portchester was a Saxon fortress under the name of *Caer Peris*. In the days when Roman galleys made their way up the tortuous channels of the harbour—nowadays scarcely less tortuous, shallow and perplexing—Portchester was their objective, and it is here that a strong camp such as is familiar in many parts of the country was formed. Many authorities trace the origin of the name Portchester to the fact that, before the tidal currents of the Solent had silted up the channel leading to it and the beach on which it stood, it was a port in the true sense of the word, and was so distinguished from the other "chesters" of Wessex by this prefix.

There is a legendary story concerning the village of Portchester, that it was in Saxon times one of the twenty-eight chief cities of Britain, then known as *Caer Peris*, which was built by a son of Belin, named Gurgant, who lived about 375 B.C., and it was here that Vespasian landed on invading the country to make war on the Belgæ. The Castle, which stands on the eastern side of a tongue of land is very impressive and picturesque, the huge quadrangle occupying nearly nine acres. The great tower or keep, standing at the north-west corner, is the oldest remaining portion of the original building, and dates from Saxon times. During the French Wars several floors were provided in the keep for the accommodation of the large number of prisoners who were confined here, for whom room could not be found on board the prison hulks in the harbour. The life of these captives and their occupations is told most interestingly in Sir Walter Besant's story, "The Holy Rose." How numerous the unfortunates were, and how inadequate the accommodation as regards light, air, sanitation and room may be gathered from the general History of Hampshire which states "At one time during the War there was a multitude of nearly 5,000 prisoners cooped up within the walls of Portchester Castle."

During the Napoleonic Wars a very large total of prisoners were incarcerated, and they languished till they died, were exchanged, or were released at the end of the hostilities. Many of them made toys which they sold, for the purpose of supplying themselves with additional rations and tobacco, to visitors and others, whose curiosity had drawn them

hither. Some of the ingenious articles so fashioned, of wood, or carved out of the bones of the prisoners' food, are preserved in the Museum at Portsmouth, and in the curio cupboards of houses in the district. In the middle of the last century ships, carts, boats and animals could be occasionally picked up in the cottages of Portchester, and the neighbouring towns and the villages of Fareham, Cosham and Wymering.

At the conclusion of Peace in Paris in June, 1817, the last of the prisoners departed, and the Castle was for a time partially used as barracks, but was soon abandoned and fell into ruin and decay. Nowadays it has little of interest save the memories of former days when Kings (notably King John) frequently visited it, and when its cellars of wine were famous.

Set upon a low, bleak spit of land and surrounded by miles of mud flats left bare by the tide for long hours daily, there is little wonder that it fell into the state of decay and ruin in which it stands to-day. Portchester Castle Church, dedicated to St. Mary (originally a portion of the Augustinian Priory founded by Henry I in 1133) which stands in the south-west corner in the quadrangle, has some good Norman work in it. It has been from time to time somewhat carelessly restored, but possesses a most interesting and notable Norman font and is, as a whole, very picturesque.

Portchester Castle as one leaves it, as we did at sunset to thread our way down the tortuous Channel back to Portsmouth, is singularly impressive and romantic. The ancient ivy-grown keep, the crumbling walls, the air of hoary



PORCHESTER CASTLE

antiquity, and the luminous evening haze which at times seems to envelop it forms a picture which does not soon fade from the mind, and conjures up memories of the stirring days of old when the fortress was built to resist the fiercest attack which could be then directed against it.



Old Farm Hayling.

OLD FARM, HAYLING

Douglas Simpson 1881

Southampton, recently named the "Liverpool of the South," may seem to the casual observer, who comes to it either by road from Portsmouth, through picturesque Fareham and Botley, or still better by way of Bursledon on Hamble Creek, and Netley, too modern to have much claim either to beauty or romance. The wayfarer will do well to pause at Netley ere plunging into the bustle and modernity of the

great neighbouring seaport, for Walpole wrote of Netley Abbey they "are not the ruins of Netley, but of Paradise." And, indeed, the remains of the great Cistercian Abbey owe much of their fame to the beauty of their surroundings rather than to their actual architectural value. The Priory was founded in 1239, probably by Henry III, and was occupied by the Cistercians who came over from Beaulieu. After the Dissolution of the Monasteries various noble families owned it in turn, and the Earl of Hertford entertained Elizabeth at the Abbey in 1560. Then, in 1700, it fell into the hands of a Southampton builder, who promptly set to work to destroy it, and used the stone for other purposes. His work of destruction, it is said, was stopped by the dropping out of the keystone of one of the window arches on to his head !

Nowadays the ruins are carefully preserved by the present owner. The chief beauties are the Fountain or Cloister Court, 114 feet square ; the Cruciform Church of varied Early English dates, which remains fairly complete ; the Clerestory, especially in the Lady Chapel of the south transept with interesting side windows ; the Chapter House, with richly moulded open arches and beautiful Early English lancet windows ; and the tiny, hooded fireplace of the so-called kitchen.

At the end of the peninsula on which Netley stands, reached through Hound, where anciently the monks held their market, lies the delightfully quaint and picturesque little seaport of Hamble-le-Rice. In nestles snugly under the shelter of a low, tree-clad hill at the mouth of the Hamble estuary. Its streets are narrow and winding, and houses old, and it is—and has

for centuries been—famous for its lobsters, oysters and crabs. In its way it is quite unique, and a delightfully old-world spot.

Netley Castle, which stands near the water, once formed the Abbey Gatehouse, but was made by Henry VIII into a fort for protecting that part of Southampton Water. The Victoria Hospital, a huge building in the Decorated Italian style, a quarter of a mile in length, was built for the wounded and invalided soldiers from the Crimea at a cost of about £250,000.

Southampton, which lies at the head of Southampton Water on the eastern side, and covering a peninsula-like tongue of land washed on its eastern shore by the Estuary of the Itchen, with suburbs across the water, is of more romantic and greater historic interest than at first seems possible to the visitor. Its ancient walls—now ruinous and picturesque—once did excellent service against the French pirates of long ago ; and, indeed, probably saved not only the town but also the country from being sacked and overrun with fire and sword ; the town retains many historic memories in spite of the modern commerce which has made it so great.

Its history dates from the far-off times of the Roman occupation, at a period anterior to the date of the Christian era. Of this occupation and that of the surrounding country by the Roman legions of Julius Cæsar and his successors there have been many evidences discovered in former and recent times within the confines of the town. There are also traces of the Roman road, which led from Southampton northward

to Winchester, and of the Roman fortified camp of Clausentum hard by at Bitterne on the river Itchen.

The first authentic record of the Saxon occupation of the town, then known as "Hanton," "Hantune," or "Old Hampton," occurs in the ninth century, and several authors ascribe the protecting walls and castle and keep, situated in the north-west corner of the town to the Saxons. The town with its sheltered harbour and rising prosperity did not, naturally, escape the attention of the Danes. In fact, it might almost have been considered at this time as a landing-place or base from which the Danes ravaged the surrounding country, and directed their attacks upon Winchester and other inland towns.

During the reigns of Ethelwulf, about 838, and Ethelbert, about 860, so well carried out were the raids of these Danish pirates, and so large was the force taking part in them, that even inland Winchester itself was reached along the ancient Roman road, and plundered. On the decease of Ethelred in 1016, Edmund Ironside in consequence of the hold the Danish invaders had succeeded in getting upon the country consented to a division of it with the Danish King, and during the reign of Canute, when the Anglo-Danish Government was firmly established, Southampton was made the principal royal residence, and traditionally there are many spots in the town associated with Canute. Several places in the neighbourhood—Lymington for one—claim to be the scene of King Canute's historical rebuke to his courtiers. Tradition, however, places

the spot at Canute's Point, a projecting spit of land at the mouth of the Itchen.

The legend of the Danish King and the oncoming tide, and that of heroic Sir Bevis of Southampton (who conquered the 30 feet giant) and his Squire Ascupart, enshrined in a ballad and in chap books, are mythical to a high degree ; but there are stirring stories connected with the ancient port which may be accepted as founded upon actual facts.

After the Danes there came up from far Genoa, sailing the stormy waters of the Mediterranean and the wild stretch of the Bay of Biscay, other marauders scarcely less dreaded or less cruel ; and then when Hanton was more able to resist, and when commerce came flowing towards the Island Kingdom from the scattered nations of the East, there sailed up the ten miles of blue-green water, so lovely and changeful as to inspire poets, the rich argosies and galleys laden with stuffs, carpets, wines, woods, gold, silver and gems. And, indeed, during the years immediately succeeding the Norman Conquest its importance, from its nearness to the coast of France and of Normandy, and its splendidly protected harbour, became more and more appreciated, and it was soon a favourite port of embarkation for the Norman Kings on their way from England to their French Duchy. In modern times the fact that Southampton possesses the advantage of a double high tide has had much to do with its prosperity.

Many churches and monasteries which had suffered so severely at the hands of the Danes were rebuilt, reorganized, and restarted on their careers of ecclesiastical and charitable

usefulness. In the reign of Henry I, in 1124, the Priory of St. Dionysius was founded. The ancient town walls were strengthened and rebuilt, and the castle was styled a royal fortress by Stephen, and in the following reign the town received its Charter of Incorporation, which was confirmed by subsequent monarchs down to Henry VI. Henry VIII came here on a visit, accompanied by unfortunate Anne Boleyn.

A few years later the town suffered greatly from the activities of Thomas Cromwell, during the period of the suppression of the monasteries, and the neighbouring Abbeys of Beaulieu, Netley and St. Denis, the Grey Friary, and other Chantries were suppressed, and their revenues, accumulated wealth, and priceless treasures in the shape of plate and reliquaries were seized, and Southampton was in many ways the poorer for the confiscations.

There are a few interesting survivals in Southampton of past ages, and among them must be mentioned the free Grammar School, founded by Edward VI in 1552, situated in Bugle Street, and used for its original purpose until 1896, when the school was transferred to West Marlands. The building is now used for the purpose of a Court for County Magistrates. The present arms of the town date from August 4th, 1575, when Queen Elizabeth granted them by a patent. In them are incorporated a shield bearing the county roses supported by two lions rampant. The shield itself is surmounted by a castle, out of which rises "A quene, in her

imperial majestie, holding in the right hand the Sword of Justice, in the left the Balance of Equitie." In addition to this appear also "two ships-proper on the sea."

Of long past times, when knight and squire and man-at-arms passed along the High Street and beneath the Bar Gate to the water-side, from whence they used to embark on board the transports of that day for the French Wars of Edward III and Henry V, there remain many traces. Of the interesting and imposing walls which formerly enclosed the town there are—more especially along the west shore—considerable though somewhat ruinous portions left standing. Once washed at high tide, they are now separated from the water's edge by a wide road way and promenade. The walls are about forty feet in height, and are embattled and pierced for the discharge of arrows and firearms by the defenders. One of the most prominent features of this stretch of wall along the west shore is the fine high corner tower—but, alas, much spoiled and hidden by the modern inn literally built on to it—known as the Arundel Tower, from the fact that considerable repairs were made to the original structure in the latter half of the fifteenth century by Thomas Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel. It was with the idea of protecting this tower from the action of the sea (which until quite comparatively recent times washed its base at every tide), that the lightermen of Southampton were by ancient custom enjoined to carry stone yearly from the Isle of Wight, and deposit it on the shore near the walls to counteract and break the force of the water. And with a similar object the Hythe

boatmen were obliged to do likewise, or pay fourpence toll when landing either passengers or goods.

Southward along this wall stood the fourteenth century-entrance to the town known as the Bridle Gate, at the foot of Simnel Street, leading up from the water-side to the base court of the Castle. Close by is one of the most interesting survivals of former times, an exceptionally well-preserved vault of the late Norman period, possibly the wine store of the Castle, and bearing on the stone sides of the doorway marks caused most probably by the rubbing of the porters' shoulders as they passed through with their loads. Just beyond this is a stretch of arcaded wall, the fourteenth-century arches of which are very uncommon and in different styles, and on top of them run a parapet and a walk for the sentry to pass along. It is through one of the arches we have referred to that the interesting building commonly known as King John's Palace is reached. Historians are fairly well agreed that this almost unique building—a Norman dwelling-house—with its thick, rough walls, tiny windows and rough hewn rafters, was the King's house attached to the neighbouring Castle in the reign of King John, even if not used as such by other sovereigns.

An inspection of the National Records provides a considerable amount of information concerning its repair at various times, safe custody, and the fact that it was esteemed as a Royal residence. In the adjacent wall are the remains of a fine Norman fireplace, by the side of which it is even likely Henry I waited, in November, 1120, for news of the

“ White Ship ” and his son, Prince William, who was drowned by this wreck off the French coast. The West Gate is another deeply interesting relic of long ago, and forms the remaining building of interest contiguous to this portion of the old town walls.

The famous God’s House, with its Hospital and Chapel, although the ancient house has been sadly modernized, is one of the most interesting blocks of buildings in Southampton, the last-named is also known as the French Church of St. Julian’s from the fact that it was devoted to the use of French Protestant refugees. In the Chapel lie buried three distinguished men of the reign of Henry V: the Earl of Cambridge; Lord Scrope of Masham; and Sir Thomas Grey, of Heaton; whose conspiracy and execution outside the Bar Gate within a few hours of the discovery of the plot form a stirring incident in Shakespeare’s “ Henry V.” Although God’s House, founded it is thought sometime during the reign of Henry III, has been modernized, and does not possess such architectural interest as the Earl of Leicester’s Hospital, Warwick; St. Cross, Winchester; and other similar foundations which could be named, it yet forms a good example of the ancient hospitals or almshouses, and is one of the oldest still remaining in England. The chapel dates from the latter end of the twelfth century, and the restoration, so far as the interior is concerned, has been very carefully and sympathetically carried out. Unhappily the exterior has been cased, and this has destroyed much of its interest. The chancel arch is almost Early English in character, and the doorways are all of the round-headed

type ; and at the eastern end there is a piscina of probably thirteenth century workmanship.

Another notable survival of mediæval times stands at the northern extremity of the ancient walled town, where the new town may be said to meet the old. It is an interesting, though somewhat incongruous, survival amidst the noise and throng of twentieth century traffic, houses and bustle. Known anciently as the " Barred " Gate (corrupted eventually into the name Bargate it now bears), it is undoubtedly one of the " Bars of Hampton " which we have found mentioned as far back as the twelfth century. It forms a very striking object as one approaches it up the High Street, which latter loses its few features of bygone times as soon as one passes through the archway, and the front that one sees is of somewhat later date than the central part of the gate. The lions sejant, now placed on either side, once stood on the bridge at the far side of the ditch across which the gate was approached by a drawbridge.

In a chamber above the main entrance a Guildhall was formed in Elizabeth's reign, and this has been at various times enlarged and improved, and is now used as a police court. On one of the shields of the gate appear the arms of Adam de Cardonnel who was a Huguenot refugee, a member of the Company of White Paper Makers to which Portal also belonged. In the justices' room are two paintings, said to represent Sir Bevis, whose sword is preserved in the armoury of Arundel Castle.

Of ecclesiastical buildings St. Michael's Church, dating

from the commencement of the twelfth century, and still retaining many of its original features, is the chief. The tower is the oldest portion of the church ; the nave and aisles are probably of considerably later date than the original building. The latter suffered several times at the hands of the French pirates, whose attacks proved such terrifying experiences for the townsfolk in the early part of the fourteenth century. The nave was burned by these marauders in 1338, and much damage was done to other portions of the building.

Among the interesting features of the interior are a very ancient font of black limestone probably from Tournay, and a small collection of chained books.

How picturesque a town Southampton of long ago was needs some imagination to visualize, but one can gather something from Leland, who refers to it in his "Itinerary," at the time of Henry VIII, as possessing "one of the fairest streates that ys yn any town of al England, and yt is well builded for Timbre Building," and the impression made on the youthful King Edward VI was of a town which had "for the bigness of it as fine houses as be at London."

Southampton to-day may be described as a fairly picturesque town, though modernity and convenience, rather than beauty, distinguish the suburbs which are so constantly extended on all sides landward.

Almost every seaport has its distinguishing feature, and a long acquaintance with Southampton inclines us to think that the mingling of the old with the new is what strikes the observer most forcibly. But the greatness and spirit of

Southampton cannot be fully realized until one has explored the vast docks, which cover so many acres. Here craft of all kinds come and go, taking in and discharging cargoes from every quarter of the globe, bringing to this growing



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port of the Kingdom, the wines of the south, and the rich and varied merchandise of Africa, India, China, the two Americas, the West Indies, the countries of the Levant and our own Colonies and Dominions.

Amid the docks, wharves, work-shops, ship-building yards, boiler factories, and huge unlovely warehouses of the waterside portions of the town, it is possible to realize to some

small extent the ocean going commerce, and widely extended Empire of the Seas held by Great Britain.

Coming up Southampton Water, at sunset, as one gazes at the lowering smoke-hung town ahead, with its forests of masts pencilled against the lemon-hued sky, it has a strange pictorial beauty that full daylight denies to it. The beauty of a great port, half-slumbering, half-awake, with the myriad lights creeping out one by one to challenge the silvery stars.

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